CHILD and COUNTRY

Will Levington Comfort

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CHILD AND COUNTRY

BY WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT

LOT & COMPANY
RED FLEECE
MIDSTREAM
DOWN AMONG MEN
FATHERLAND

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY
NEW YORK

Child and Country

A Book of the Younger Generation

BY

WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT

AUTHOR OF "MIDSTREAM," "LOT & COMPANY," "DOWN AMONG MEN," "ROUTLEDGE RIDES ALONE," ETC., ETC.

NEW YORK

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TO THOSE

WHO COME AFTER THE WRECKERS

TO THE BUILDERS

OF THE RISING GENERATION

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FOREWORD

. . . To-day the first glimpse of this manuscript as a whole. It was all detached pieces before, done over a period of many months, with many intervening tasks, the main idea slightly drifting from time to time. . . . The purpose on setting out, was to relate the adventure of homemaking in the country, with its incidents of masonry, child and rose culture, and shore-conservation. It was not to tell others how to build a house or plant a garden, or how to conduct one's life on a shore-acre or two. Not at this late day. I was impelled rather to relate how we found plenty with a little; how we entered upon a new dimension of health and length of days; and from the safe distance of the desk, I wanted to laugh over a city man's adventures with drains and east winds, country people and the meshes of possession.

In a way, our second coming to the country was like the landing of the Swiss Family Robinson upon that little world of theirs in the midst

of the sea. Town life had become a subtle persecution. We hadn't been wrecked exactly, but there had been times in which we were torn and weary, understanding only vaguely that it was the manner of our days in the midst of the crowd that was dulling the edge of health and taking the bloom from life. I had long been troubled about the little children in school—the winter sicknesses, the amount of vitality required to resist contagions, mental and physical—the whole tendency of the school toward making an efficient and a uniform product, rather than to develop the intrinsic and inimitable gift of each child.

We entered half-humorously upon the education of children at home, but out of this activity emerged the main theme of the days and the work at hand. The building of a house proved a natural setting for that; gardens and woods and shore rambles are a part; the new poetry and all the fine things of the time belong most intensely to that. Others of the coming generation gathered about the work here; and many more rare young beings who belong, but have not yet come, send us letters from the fronts of their struggle.

It has all been very deep and dramatic to me, a study of certain builders of to-morrow taking their place higher and higher day by day in the thought and action of our life. They have given me more than I could possibly give them. They have monopolised the manuscript. Chapter after

chapter are before me—revelations they have brought—and over all, if I can express it, is a dream of the education of the future. So the children and the twenty-year-olds are on every page almost, even in the title.

Meanwhile the world-madness descended, and all Europe became a spectacle. There is no inclination to discuss that, although there have been days of quiet here by the fire in which it seemed that we could see the crumbling of the rock of ages and the glimmering of the New Age above the red chaos of the East. And standing a little apart, we perceived convincing signs of the long-promised ignition on the part of America—signs as yet without splendour, to be sure. These things have to do with the very breath we draw; they relate themselves to our children and to every conception of home—not the war itself, but the forming of the new social order, the message thrilling for utterance in the breasts of the rising generation. For they are the builders who are to follow the wreckers of war.

Making a place to live on the lake shore, the development of bluff and land, the building of study and stable and finally the stone house (a pool of water in the centre, a roof open to the sunlight, the outer walls broken with chimneys for the inner fires), these are but exterior cultivations, the establishment of a visible order that is

but a symbol of the intenser activity of the natures within.

Quiet, a clean heart, a fragrant fire, a press for garments, a bin of food, a friendly neighbour, a stretch of distance from the casements—these are sane desirable matters to gather together; but the fundamental of it all is, that they correspond to a picture of the builder's ideal. There is a bleakness about buying one's house built; in fact, a man cannot really possess anything unless he has an organised receptivity—a conception of its utilities that has come from long need. A man might buy the most perfect violin, but it is nothing more than a curio to him unless he can bring out its wisdom. It is the same in mating with a woman or fathering a child.

There is a good reason why one man keeps pigs and another bees, why one man plants petunias and another roses, why the many can get along with maples when elms and beeches are to be had, why one man will exchange a roomful of man-fired porcelain for one bowl of sunlit alabaster. No chance anywhere. We call unto ourselves that which corresponds to our own key and tempo; and so long as we live, there is a continual re-adjustment without, the more unerringly, to meet the order within.

The stone house is finished, roses have bloomed, but the story of the cultivation of the human spirits is really just beginning—a work so joyous and pro-

ductive that I would take any pains to set forth with clearness the effort to develop each intrinsic gift, to establish a deep breathing of each mind—a fulness of expression on the one hand, and a selfless receptivity on the other. We can only breathe deeply when we are at peace. This is true mentally as well as physically, and soulfully, so far as one can see. The human fabric is at peace only when its faculties are held in rhythm by the task designed for them. Expression of to-day makes the mind ready for the inspiration of to-morrow.

It may be well finally to make it clear that there is no personal ambition here to become identified with education in the accepted sense. Those who come bring nothing in their hands, and answer no call save that which they are sensitive enough to hear without words. Hearing that, they belong, indeed. Authorship is the work of Stonestudy, and shall always be; but first and last is the conviction that literature and art are but incident to life; that we are here to become masters of life—artists, if possible, but in any case, men.

. . . To-day the glimpse of it all—that this is to be a book of the younger generation. . . . I remember in the zeal of a novice, how earnestly I planned to relate the joys of rose-culture, when some yellow teas came into their lovely being in answer to the long preparation. It seemed to me that a man could do little better for his quiet joy

than to raise roses; that nothing was so perfectly designed to keep romance perennial in his soul. Then the truth appeared—greater things that were going on here—the cultivation of young and living minds, minds still fluid, eager to give their faith and take the story of life; minds that are changed in an instant and lifted for all time, if the story is well told. . . . So in the glimpse of this book as a whole, as it comes to-day (an East wind rising and the gulls blown inland) I find that a man may build a more substantial thing than a stone house, may realise an intenser cultivation than even tea-roses require; and of this I want to tell simply and with something of order from the beginning.

WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT.

STONESTUDY, March, 1916.

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CHILD AND COUNTRY

CHILD AND COUNTRY

1

BEES AND BLOOMS

IN another place,* I have touched upon our first adventure in the country. It was before the children came. We went to live in a good district, but there was no peace there. I felt *forgotten*. I had not the stuff to stand that. My life was shallow and artificial enough then to require the vibration of the town; and at the end of a few weeks it was feverishly missed. The soil gave me nothing. I look back upon that fact now with something like amazement, but I was young. Lights and shining surfaces were dear; all waste and stimulation a part of necessity, and that which the many rushed after seemed the things which a man should have. Though the air was dripping with fragrance and the early summer ineffable with fruit-blossoms, the sense of self

*Midstream, 1914, George H. Doran Company, New York.

poisoned the paradise. I disdained even to make a place of order of that little plot. There was no inner order in my heart—on the contrary, chaos in and out. I had not been man-handled enough to return with love and gratefulness to the old Mother. Some of us must go the full route of the Prodigal, even to the swine and the husks, before we can accept the healing of Nature.

So deep was the imprint of this experience that I said for years: "The country is good, but it is not for me." . . . I loved to read about the country, enjoyed hearing men talk about their little places, but always felt a temperamental exile from their dahlias and gladioli and wistaria. I knew what would happen to me if I went again to the country to live, for I judged by the former adventure. Work would stop; all mental activity would sink into a bovine rumination.

Yet during all these years, the illusions were falling away. It is true that there is never an end to illusions, but they become more and more subtle to meet our equipment. I had long since lost my love for the roads of the many—the crowded roads that run so straight to pain. A sentence had stood up again and again before me, that the voice of the devil is the voice of the crowd.

Though I did not yet turn back to the land, I had come to see prolonged city-life as one of the ranking menaces of the human spirit, though at

our present stage of evolution it appears a necessary school for a time. Two paragraphs from an earlier paper on the subject suggest one of the larger issues:

"The higher the moral and intellectual status of a people, the more essential become space, leisure and soul-expression for bringing children into the world. When evolving persons have reached individuality, and the elements of greatness are formative within them, they pay the price for reversion to worldliness in the extinction of name. The race that produced Emerson and Thoreau and Whitman, that founded our culture and gave us a name in English, is following the red Indian *westward* off the face of the earth.

"Trade makes the city; congestion makes for commonness and the death of the individual. Only the younger and physical races, or the remnant of that race of instinctive tradesmen which has failed as a spiritual experiment, can exist in the midst of the tendencies and conditions of metropolitan America. One of the most enthralling mysteries of life is that children will not come to highly evolved men and women who have turned back upon their spiritual obligations and clouded the vision which was their birthright."

It is very clear to me that the Anglo-Saxons at least, after a generation or two of town-life, must give up trade and emerge from the City for the

recreating part of their year, or else suffer in deeper ways than death. The City will do for those younger-souled peoples that have not had their taste of its cruel order and complicating pressures; for the Mediterranean peoples already touched with decadence; for the strong yet simple peasant vitalities of Northern Europe, but the flower of the American entity has already remained too long in the ruck of life.

There came a Spring at last in which there was but one elm-tree. The rest was flat-buildings and asphalt and motor-puddled air. I was working long in those April days, while the great elm-tree broke into life at the window. There is a green all its own to the young elm-leaves, and that green was all our Spring. Voices of the street came up through it, and whispers of the wind. I remember one smoky moon, and there was a certain dawn in which I loved, more strangely than ever, the cut-leaved profile against the grey-red East. The spirit of it seemed to come to me, and all that the elm-tree meant—hill-cabins and country dusks, bees and blooms and stars, and the plain holy life of kindliness and aspiration. In this dawn I found myself dreaming, thirsting, wasting for all that the elm-tree knew—as if I were exiled from the very flesh that could bring the good low earth to my senses again.

Could it be that something was changed within —that we were ready at last? One of those

Spring days, in the midst of a forenoon's work, I stopped short with the will to go to the country to look for a place to rent. I left the garret, found Penelope, who was ready in fifteen minutes. We crossed the river first of all into Canada, because the American side within fifty miles in every direction had been sorted over again and again, by those who had followed just such an impulse. In the smaller city opposite, we learned that there were two suburban cars—one that would take us to the Lake St. Claire shore, and another that crossed the country to Lake Erie, travelling along her northern indentations for nearly ten miles.

"We'll take the car that leaves here first," said I.

It was the Erie car. In the smoking compartment I fell into conversation with a countryman who told me all that could possibly be synthesised by one mind regarding the locality we were passing through. He suggested that we try our fortune in the little town where the car first meets the Lake. This we did and looked up and down that Main Street. It was quiet and quaint, but something pressed home to us that was not all joy—the tightness of old scar-tissue in the chest. . . . The countryman came running to us from the still standing car, though this was not his destination, and pointing to a little grey man in the street, said:

"He can tell you more than I can."

I regarded the new person with awe if he could do that. . . . In a way it was true. He was a leisurely-minded man, who knew what he was going to say before he spoke, had it correctly in mind. The product came forth edited. He called men by 'phone—names strange to me then that have become household names since—while we sat by smiling and silent in his little newspaper shop. . . . And those who came wanted to know if we drank, when they talked of renting their cottages; and if we were actors.

Not that we looked like actors, but it transpired that actor-folk had rented one of the cottages another year, and had sat up late and had not always clothed themselves continually full-length. Once, other actor people had motored down, and it was said that those on the back seats of the car had been rigid among beer-cases.

We were given the values and disadvantages of the East shore and also of the West shore, the town between. . . . Somehow we always turn to the East in our best moments and it was so this day. . . . We were directed to the house of a man who owned two little cottages just a mile from town. He was not well that day, but his boy went with us to show the cottages. That boy you shall be glad to know.

We walked together down the long lane, and I did not seem able to reach our guide's heart, so we were silent, but Penelope came between us. He

would have been strange, indeed, had she failed. . . . I look back now from where I sit—to that long lane. I love it very much for it led to the very edge of a willowed bluff—to the end of the land. Erie brimmed before us. It led to a new life, too.

I had always disliked Erie—as one who lived in the Lake Country and chose his own. I approved mildly of St. Claire; Michigan awed me from a little boy's summer; Huron was familiar from another summer, but Erie heretofore had meant only something to be crossed—something shallow and petulant. Here she lay in the sunlight, with bars of orange light darkening to ocean blue, and one far sparkling line in the West. Then I knew that I had wronged her. She seemed not to mind, but leisurely to wait. We faced the South from the bluffs, and I thought of the stars from this vantage. . . . If a man built his house here, he could explain where he lived by the nearest map in a Japanese house, or in a Russian peasant's house, for Erie to them is as clear a name as Baikal or the Inland Sea is to us. I had heard Japanese children repeat the names of the Great Lakes. When you come to a shore like this you are at the end of the landscape. You must pause. Sŏmehow I think—we are pausing still. One must pause to project a dream.

. . . For weeks there, in a little rented place, we were so happy that we hardly ventured to speak

of it. We had expected so little, and had brought such weariness. Day after day unfolded in the very fulness of life, and the small flower-beds there on the stranger's land held the cosmic answer. All that summer Jupiter marked time across the southern heavens; and I shall never forget the sense of conquest in hiving the first swarm of bees. They had to be carried on a branch down a deep gulley, and several hundred feet beyond. Two-thirds of the huge cluster were in the air about me, before the super was lifted. Yet there was not a sting from the tens of thousands. We had the true thirst that year. Little things were enough; we were innocent, even of possession, and brought back to the good land all the sensitizing that the City had given. There were days in which we were so happy—that another summer of such life would have seemed too much to ask.

I had lived three weeks, when I remembered that formerly I read newspapers, and opened the nearest. The mystery and foreignness of it was as complete as the red fire of Antares that gleamed so balefully every night across the Lake—a hell of trials and jealousy and suicide, obscenity and passion. It all came up from the sheet to my nostrils like the smell of blood.

. . . There are men and women in town who are dying for the country; literally this is so, and such numbers of them that any one who lives apart

from the crowds and calls forth guests from time to time, can find these sufferers among his little circle of friends. They come here for week-ends and freshen up like newly watered plants—turning back with set faces early Monday morning. I think of a flat of celery plants that have grown to the end of the nourishment of their crowded space, and begin to yellow and wither, sick of each other. . . . One does not say what one thinks. It is not a simple thing for those whose life and work is altogether identified with the crowded places, to uproot for roomy planting in the country. But the fact remains, many are dying to be free.

The City, intolerable as it is in itself—in its very nature against the growth of the body and soul of man after a certain time—is nevertheless the chief of those urging forces which shall bring us to simplicity and naturalness at the last. Manhood is built quite as much by learning to avoid evil as by cultivating the aspiration for the good.

Just as certainly as there are thousands suffering for the freedom of spaces, far advanced in a losing fight of vitality against the cruel tension of city life, there are whole races of men who have yet to meet and pass through this terrifying complication of the crowds, which brings a refining gained in no other way. All growth is a passage through hollows and over hills, though the journey regarded as a whole is an ascent.

A great leader of men who has never met the

crowds face to face is inconceivable. He must have fought for life in the depths and pandemoniums, to achieve that excellence of equipment which makes men turn to him for his word and his strength. We are so made that none of us can remain sensitive to prolonged beauty; neither can we endure continuously the stifling hollows between the hills. Be very sure the year-round countryman does not see what you see coming tired and half-broken from the town; and those who are caught and maimed by the City cannot conceive their plight, as do you, returning to them again from the country replenished and refreshed.

The great names of trade have been country-bred boys, but it is equally true that the most successful farmers of to-day are men who have returned to Nature from the town, some of them having been driven to the last ditch physically and commanded to return or die. It is in the turnings of life that we bring a fresh eye to circumstances and events.

Probably in a nation of bad workmen, no work is so stupidly done as the farming. Great areas of land have merely been scratched. There are men within an hour's ride from here who plant corn in the same fields every year, and check it throughout in severing the lateral roots by deep cultivation. They and their fathers have planted corn, and yet they have not the remotest idea of what takes place in their fields during the long

summer from the seedling to the full ear; and very rarely in the heart of the countryman is there room for rapture. Though they have the breadth of the horizon line and all the skies to breathe in, few men look up more seldom.

2

BLUFF AND SHORE

THERE is no playground like a sandy shore—and this was sheltered from the north by a high clay bluff that tempered all voices from below and made a sounding board for the winds. The beach, however, was not as broad then as now. To the east for a mile is a shallow sickle of shore with breakers on the point. In itself this indentation is but a squab of the main Pigeon Bay, which stretches around for twenty miles and is formed of Pelee Point, the most southern extension of Canada. The nearer and lesser point is like a bit of the Mediterranean. It takes the greys of the rain-days with a beauty and power of its own, and the mornings flash upon it. I call it the Other Shore, a structure of idealism forming upon it from much contemplation at the desk. The young people turn to it often from the classes.

The height of land from which the Other Shore is best visible had merely been seen so far. from

the swimming place in front of the rented cottages. It was while in the water that I determined to explore. The first thing that impressed me when I reached the eminence was the silence. It was something to be dreamed of, when the Lake was also still. There was no road; a hay field came down to the very edge of the bluff, and the shore fifty feet below was narrow and rocky. Very few people passed there. That most comfortable little town was lying against the rear horizon to the West. I used to come in the evenings and smoke as the sun went down. Sometimes the beauty of it was all I could bear—the voices of children in the distance and the Pelee light flashing every seven seconds far out in the Lake.

I first saw it in dry summer weather and did not know that a bumper crop of frogs had been harvested that Spring from the deep, grass-covered hollows formed by the removal of clay for a brick-business long ago. There was good forage on the mounds, which I did not appreciate at the time. The fact is these mounds were formed of pure dark loam, as fine a soil as anywhere in the Lake Country.

Those of the dim eyes say that once upon a time an orchard and brick-house stood on a bluff in front of the brick-yard, on a natural point, but that the Lake had nibbled and nibbled, finally digesting the property, fruit-trees, brick-house and all.

I could well believe it when the first storm came. An East wind for three days brought steady deluges of high water that wore down the shore-line almost visibly. A week later came a West wind that enfiladed, so that what remained of the little point was caught in the cross-play of the weathers. If some one did not intervene, the brick-yard site would follow the orchard—that was clear.

. . . Three or four times the owner came to see me. We had rejoiced in the rented property, rejoiced in owning nothing, yet having it all. . . . Thoreau in his daily westward migrations studied it all with the same critical delight, and found his abode where others did not care to follow. We look twice at the spot we choose to build our house. That second look is not so free and innocent. . . . Yet a man may build his house. Thoreau had no little brood coming up, and I have doubted many times, even in moments of austere admiration, if he wouldn't have lived longer, had there been a woman about to nourish him. She would have insisted upon a better roof, at least. . . . I told the neighbour-man I would buy the brick-yard, if he didn't stop pestering me about it. He smiled and came once too often.

The day before, standing upon that height of land (not too near the edge, for it looked higher in those days) I had gazed across the Lake, at one with it all, a friendly voyager of the skies, comrade of the yarrow and the daisy. I remember the

long grass of the hollows, the peculiar soft bloom of it, and what a place it was to lie and dream, until one became a part of the solution of sunshine and tinted immensity.

So I lost the universe for a bit of bluff on the Lake shore.

When the East wind came, I saw with proprietary alarm the point wearing away. That which coloured the Lake was fine rose-clay and it was mine, bought by the foot-front. . . . A man may build his house.

Every one who came along told me how to save the point. For weeks they came. Heavy driftwood was placed in times of peace, so that the sand would be trapped in storm. No one failed me in advice, but the East wind made match-wood of all arrangements. . . . The high water would wash and weaken the base, and in the heaviness of the rains the bulk of earth above would fall—only to be carried out again by the waves. The base had to be saved if a natural slope was ever to be secured. Farther down the shore I noted one day that a row of boulders placed at right angles with the shore had formed a small point, and that a clump of willows behind had retained it. This was a bit of advice that had not come so authoritatively, but I followed the cue, and began rolling up rocks now like an ancient Peruvian. It was a little jetty, that looked like a lot of labour to a city man, and it remained as it was for several days.

One morning I came forth in lashing weather—and rubbed my eyes. The jetty was not in sight. It was covered with a foot of sand, and the clay was dry at the base. A day's work with a team after that in low water, snaking the big boulders into line with a chain—a sixty-foot jetty by sundown, built on top of the baby spine I had poked together. No man ever spent a few dollars more profitably. Even these stones were covered in time, and there was over a yard-deep of sand buttressing the base of the clay and thinning out on the slope of shore to the end of the stones. Later, when building, I took four hundred yards of sand from the east side of the stone jetty, and it was all brought back by the next storm. . . .

I read somewhere with deep and ardent sanction that a man isn't worth his spiritual salt if he lets a locality hold him, or possessions possess him; and yet, the spell was broken a little when we came to buy. Whenever you play with the meshes of possession, a devil is near at hand to weave you in. It is true that we took only enough Lake-frontage for quiet, and enough depth for a permanent fruit-garden—all for the price of a fifty-foot lot in the City; but these things call upon one for a certain property-mindedness and desiring, in the usage of which the human mind is common and far from admirable. There were days in the thrall of stone-work and grading and drainage, in which I forgot the sun-path and the cloud-

shadows; nights in which I saw fireplaces and sleeping-porches (still innocent of matter to make the dreams come true), instead of the immortal signatures of the heavens.

But we had learned our City lessons rather well, and these disturbers did not continue to defile. A man may build his house, if he can also forget it. A few good things—perennials, by all means an elm-tree, stone-work and an oaken door; the things that need not replenishing in materials, that grow old with you, or reach their prime after you have passed—these are enough. For a home that does not promote your naturalness, is a place of vexation to you and to your children.

Yet it is through this breaking of the husks of illusion—through the very artificialities that we come to love the sane and holy things. The man of great lands, who draws his livelihood from the soil, can never know the healing nor the tender loveliness that came up to us that first summer. One must know the maiming of the cities to bring to the land a surface that nature floods with ecstasies. Carlyle thundered against artificial things all his wonderful life, exalted the splendours of simplicity which permit a man to forget himself—just missing the fact that a man must be artificial before he can be natural; that we learn by suffering and come up through the hell and complication of cities only to show us wherein our treasure lies.

The narrow non-sensitive consciousness of the peasant, with its squirrel-dream of filled barns, its cruelty and continual garnering—that is very far from the way. Tolstoi went against the eternal law to try that. He wanted simplicity so tragically that he permitted his desire to prevail, and turned back to the peasants for it. It is against the law to turn back. The peasants are simple because they have not met the intervening complications between their inland lake consciousness and the oceanic clarity ahead. Be very sure that none will escape the complication, for we rise to different dimensions of simplicity through such trials. War, Trade, the City, and all organised hells are our training-fields. The tragedy is to remain, to remain fixed in them—not to rush forth at length from our miserable self-consciousness and self-serving in the midst of them. Cosmic simplicity is ahead; the naturalness of the deeper health of man—that is ahead.

That summer is identified with the Shore. I worked at the desk through the long forenoons, and in a bathing-suit for the rest of the day. I expect to get to the Shore again when the last of the builders leave the bluff, when the bit of an orchard can run itself, and the big and little trees are at home. They are in sick-beds now from transplanting. From one to another I move almost every day. It is not that they are on my land—that insensate motive is pretty well done

away with. But they have been uprooted and moved, and they are fighting to live. I sometimes think that they need some one to watch. If one goes away for a week—there is a change, sometimes for the worse. The sun strikes them on a different side; their laterals and tap-roots have been severed; they meet different conditions of soil than they were trained for. Much water helps, but they must breathe, and sometimes mulch keeps them too cold. Then they have their enemies like every other living thing—and low in health from moving, they cannot withstand these foes without help. The temporality of all things—even of the great imperturbable trees—is a thought of endless visitation in Nature. She seems to say morning and evening, "Do not forget that everything here must pass."

There is to be little woodland, a miniature forest, a hundred feet long and thirty feet wide only. Beech and ash and elm are started there—dogwoods and hawthorns and lilacs. Mulch from the woods is being brought, and violets. Twice I have tried to make young hickories live, but failed. I think the place where the roots are cut in transplanting should be sealed with wax. A man here said that you can transplant hickories if you get all the roots, but that they bleed to death even in winter, if their laterals are severed. . . . I want the birds to come to this little wood. Of course, it will be many years before it follows the plan,

but there is a smile in the idea. The hawthorns came whole; the ash and beech are doing well. Some wild grape is started, but that must be watched for it is a beautiful murderer. . . .

I want to get back to the Shore. Something was met there the first summer that I yearn for again—close to the sand, close to the voices of the water. The children often tell me what I feel. To them the stones have their gnomes, the water its sprites, and the sand a spirit of healing. There, too, the sunlight is so intense and vitalising as it plays upon the water and penetrates the margin.

The clay bluff is finding its grade, since it is spared the wash from beneath. That which breaks from erosion above straightens it out below, and in time it will find a permanent slope (something near thirty degrees, they say) that cannot be approached for beauty by any artificial process. I would not miss one of the natural shelves or fissures. The Japanese are interesting in their treatment of slopes. Something of the old temples and stonepaved paths—a trickle of water over the stones, deep shadows and trailing vines—something of all this will come to the clay bluff, if time is given to play on. But that is last, as the Shore was first. . . . I brought a willow trunk there this Spring and let the waves submerge it in sand. There are fifty small shoots springing up; and they will fight their way with each other, the leaders surviving. I planted one cedar on the Shore.

It is good to plant a cedar. You are working for posterity.

The first Fall came, and nothing had been done above, though I had begun to have visions of a Spanish house there, having seen one that I could not forget somewhere in Luzon. A north-country house should have a summer heart, which is a fountain, and a winter heart which is a fireplace. I wanted both. The thought of it became clearer and clearer—a blend of *patio* and broad hearth—running water and red firelight—built of stone and decorated with ivy. A stone house with a roof of wired glass over a *patio* paved with brick; the area sunken slightly from the entrance; a balcony stretching around to connect the sleeping rooms, and rimmed with a broad shelf of oak, to hold the palms, urns, ferns and winter plants.

All this in a grove of elms and beeches, as I saw it—and as yet, there wasn't a tree on the place. First of all there needed to be a work-shop to finance the main-dream. That was built in the Fall, after the reverse was put on the devouring conditions of the Shore.

3

STONESTUDY

SOMEWHERE in the past ages, I've had something to do with stone-work. This came to me first with a poignant thrill when I found myself in the presence of the Chinese Wall. Illusion or not, it seemed as if there were ancient scars across my back—as if I had helped in that building, and under the lash, too.

. . . I heard the mason here tell his tender that he had done a lot of stone-work, but had never been watched so closely as this. He penetrated to the truth of the matter presently. I wasn't watching because I was afraid of short time or flaws of construction—I was watching because it satisfied something within, that had to do with stone-work. I do not get accustomed to the marvel of cement. The overnight bond of that heavy powder, and its terrible thirst, is a continual miracle to me. There is a satisfaction about stone-work. It is at its weakest at the moment of setting. If you can

find a bearing for one stone upon another without falling, you may know that every hour that passes for years, your wall is hardening. These things move slowly, too. All that has to do with stone-work is a slow process. In the very lifting, the masons learn that muscles must not tug or jerk, but lift slowly. The mortar that hardens slowly hardens best.

The study building happened between two long tasks of my own, so that there was time to be much outdoors. I doubt if there ever was a lovelier Fall than that—a full year before the thought of Europe became action. I watched the work—as the Japanese apprentices watch their craftsmen, so that the mind gets the picture of every process. The hand learns easily after this.

It is a grand old tool, the trowel, perhaps the most perfect of all symbols which suggest the labour of man upon the earth, his making of order out of chaos. The hammers interested me as well—six, eight, and eighteen pounds. The young man who used them was not much to look at, his body sagging a bit from labour, set in his opinions like the matter he dealt with, but terrible in his holding to what he knew, and steadily increasing that store. I have come to respect him, for he has done a great deal of stone-work here since those Fall days, when I seemed to be learning masonry all over again.

"Handle these hard-heads all day, and you're

pretty well lifted out by night," he would remark, and add deprecatingly, "as the feller says."

There's a magic about the breaking. It isn't all strength. I think it is something the same that you do in billiards to get that smooth, long roll without smashing the balls. The mason says it is in the wrist. I asked him if it was the flash of the heat through the stone that broke it.

"No, it's just the way you hit it," he answered.

Two old masons worked with him for a time on the later work. They have built in these parts thousands of tons of brick and stone—fifty years of masonry; and their order is wonderful. I watched them taking their stone-hammers to the stable in the evening, and placing them just so. They have learned their mastery over the heavy things; they have hewed to the Line, and built to the Square. Their eyes are dim but the essence of their being (I cannot think it otherwise) is of more orderly integration. There is a nobility from stone-work which the masons put on with the years—the tenders have it not; neither have any of the indiscriminate labour men. One must have a craft to achieve this. The building is not so much. The houses and barns and stores which the elder masons pass everywhere as the labour of their hands in this country—they are but symbols of the building of character within. They see *into* the stones, see through their weathered coatings. To another all would look the same—the blacks

and reds and whites, even the amalgans—all grey-brown and weathered outside—but the masons know what is within, the colour and grain and beauty.

"Try that one," I might say, looking for a certain fire-place corner.

"No, that's a black feller."

"And this?"

"Good colour, but he ain't got no grain—all *gnurly*—as the feller says."

Sometime this mason will be able to see like that into the hearts of men. . . .

A stone study sixteen by twenty-three feet, built about a chimney—faced stone in and out, windows barred for the vines, six-inch beams to hold a low gable roof, and a damper in the chimney; the door of oak, wooden pegs to cover the screw-insets, a few rugs, a few books, the magic of firelight in the stone cave—a Mediterranean vision of curving shore to the East, and the single door overhanging the Lake—to the suspense of distance and Southern constellations.

I laugh at this—it sounds so pompous and costly—but it is the shop of a poor man. The whole Lake-frontage, as I have told you, cost no more than a city lot; and with sand on the beach, and stone on the shore and nearby fields, it all came to be as cheaply as a wooden cabin—indeed, it had to. That winter after we had left for the City, the elms were put out—a few six-inch trunks, brought

with their own earth frozen to them—a specimen of oak, walnut, hickory (so hard to move)—but an elm overtone was the plan, and a clump of priestly pines near the stable. These are still in the revulsions of transition; their beauty is yet to be. Time brings that, as it will smoke the beams, clothe the stone-work in vines, establish the roses and wistaria on the Southern exposure, slope and mellow and put the bloom over all.

We remained until November and returned the following April to stay. In the meantime the three children—a girl of ten and two younger boys —had almost their final bit of public schooling, though I was not so sure of that then; in fact, I planned to have them continue their training from April on in the small town school until the summer vacation. This was tried for a few weeks, the result of the experience hastening us toward the task of teaching our own.

4

IMAGINATION

MATTERS of child-education became really interesting to me for the first time that winter. There were certain unfoldings of the little daughter in our house, and I was associating a good deal with a group of teachers in town, some of whom while still professionally caught in the rigid forms of modern education, were decades ahead in realisation. I recall especially a talk with one of my old teachers, a woman who had taught thirty years, given herself freely to three generations—her own and mine and to another since then. She had administered to me a thing called *rhetoric* in another age, and she looked just the same, having kept her mind wide open to new and challenging matters of literature and life and religious thought.

I had the pleasant sense in this talk of bringing my doubts and ideas to her tentatively, much as I used to bring an essay in school days. She still retained a vivid impression of my faults, but the

very finest human relationships are established upon the knowledge of one's weaknesses—as the Master established His church upon the weakest link of the discipleship. Speaking of the children, I observed:

"I find them ready, *when they ask*. In the old occult schools there is a saying that the teacher will always come half-way, but that the student must also come half-way——"

"It is soil and seed in everything," the woman said. "In all life, it is so. There must be a giving, but also a receiving. I talk to five classes a day—twenty-five to fifty students each—but so much falls upon stony ground, among tares, so much is snapped up by the birds——"

"When a child asks a question, he is prepared to receive," I repeated. "If the answer is true and well-designed, it will stay. The question itself proves that the soil is somehow ready——"

"Yes," she said, "but one cannot sit at a desk and wait for questions. The teacher in dealing with numbers must not only plant the seed, but prepare the soil, too."

"I should say that the way to do that would be to quicken the imagination—to challenge the imagination," I suggested. "I know it has to be done in writing a story. One has to pick up the reader and carry him away at first. And most readers are limp or logy in the midst of abundance."

The teacher bowed gravely. Apparently she had come to listen.

". . . Now, with this little girl here, there is but one subject that surely interests her. That has to do with the old Mother of us all——"

"Nature?"

"Yes. I've tried to find out something of what Nature means to her—what pictures *mean* Nature to that fresh young mind. It seems to her, Nature is a kind of presiding mother to all things, possibly something like a God-mother—to kittens and trees and butterflies and roses and children. She is mistress of the winds and the harvests. . . . I have talked with her about it. Sometimes again, Nature is like a wonderful cabinet—shelf after shelf full of amazing things, finished or to be finished. I told her about the Sun as the Father, and Nature the Mother. That helped her. She held to that. Always now when we fall into talk *naturally*—it is about the old Mother and the brilliant Father who pours his strength upon all concerned—Mother Nature's mate."

The teacher nodded indulgently. "That's preparing the soil. That's quickening the imagination. But one must have imagination to do that——"

We fell silent. I was thinking of the old school days—of the handful of days in the midst of thousands that had left a gleam; of the tens of thousands of young women now teaching in Amer-

ica without the gleam; beginning to teach at the most distracted period of their lives, when all Nature is drawing them toward mating and reproduction. . . .

"Yes, a teacher should have imagination," I added. "There's no way out of that, really. A teacher who hasn't—kills it in the child; at least, all the pressure of unlit teaching is a deadening weight upon the child's imagination. What is it that makes all our misery—but the lack of imagination? If men could see the pictures around everything, the wonderful connecting lines about life, they couldn't be caught so terribly in the visible and the detached objects; they couldn't strangle and repress their real impulses and rush for things to hold in their hands for a little time. If they had imagination they would see that the things they hold in their hands are disintegrating *now* as everything in Nature is; that the hand itself weakens and loses its power. Why, here we are upstanding—half-gods asleep within us. Imagination alone—the seeing of the spirit of things—that can awaken us."

I felt the need of apologising at this point for getting on that old debatable ground—but the secret was out. It was the essence of my forming ideas on educating the children, as it is the essence of everything else—all writing, all craftsmanship, labour and life itself.

". . . Half-gods asleep in a vesture," I added.

"All nature and life prompting us to see that it is but vesture we make so much of. Children see it —and the world takes them in their dearest years, and scale by scale covers their vision. I talked with a man yesterday—a man I like—a good man, who loves his wife by the pound, believes all things prospering when fat—children and churches, purses and politicians. A big, imperial-looking man himself, world-trained, a man who has learned to cover his weaknesses and show a good loser on occasion; yet, through twenty years' acquaintance, he has never revealed to me a ray other than from the visible and the obvious. He hunted me up because one of his children seemed to want to write. We talked in a club-room and I happened to note the big steel chandelier above his head. If that should fall, this creature before me would mainly be carrion.

"You see what I mean. He has spent every energy of his life here, in building the vesture. That which would escape from the inert poundage has not been awakened. One of the queerest facts of all life is that these half-gods of ours must be awakened here in the flesh. No sooner are they aroused than we have imagination; we begin to see the connecting lines of all things, the flashes of the spirit of things at once. No workman, no craftsman or artisan can be significant without it. . . . However, as I thought of the chandelier and the sumptuous flesh beneath, I talked of writing—

something of what writing means to me. When I stopped, he said:

"'I didn't know you were so religious. . . . But about this writing matter——' and opened the subject again. . . .

"He's all right. Nature will doubtless take care of him. Perhaps his view of life: 'I see what I see and take what I can,' is as much as is asked from the many in the great plan of things—but I like madness better. To me, his is fatal enchantment; to me, wars and all tragedies are better. I would rather live intensely in error than stolidly in things as they are. If this is a devil and not a half-god that sleeps within—at least, I want him awake. I must feel his force. If he is a devil, perhaps I can beat him."

"That's something of a definition of imagination," the teacher said, "——seeing the spirit of things."

"I hadn't thought of it as a definition—but it expresses what the real part of life means to me. Men and women move about life and affairs, knowing nine out of ten times what is going to happen next in their wheel of things; what their neighbour is going to say next, from the routine of the day's events. After a little of that, I have to run away—to a book, to a task, to an awakened imagination. Only those who are in a measure like us can liberate us. That's the key to our friendships, our affections and loves. We seek

those who set us free—they have a cup to hold the vital things we have to give—a surface to receive. If they are in a measure our true kin—our dynamics is doubled. That's the secret of affinities, by the way——"

The teacher smiled at me. "Tell me more about the little girl," she said.

". . . She learned so quickly from the processes of Nature. I found her sitting in the midst of the young corn last summer, where the ground was filled with vents from the escaping moisture. I told her about the root systems and why cultivation means so much to corn in dry weather. She read one of Henry Ward Beecher's *Star Papers* and verified many of its fine parts. She finds the remarkable activities in standing water. The Shore is ever bringing her new studies. Every day is Nature's. The rain is sweet; even the East winds bring their rigour and enticements. She looks every morning, as I do, at the Other Shore. We know the state of the air by that. And the air is such drink to her. You have no idea how full the days are."

"You mean to make a writer of her?" the teacher asked.

"No—that was settled the first day. I asked the little girl what she wanted to be."

"'I want to be a mother,' she answered.

"'Of course,' said I, thoughtfully. . . . It had been the same with her music. She liked it and

did well, but it never burned into her deeps—never aroused her productivity. And I have found it so with her little attempts at written expression. She is to be a mother—the highest of the arts. . . . Once we saw the terrible drama of the hornet and the grasshopper. I had read it in Fabre, and was enabled to watch it work out with some intelligence. Nature is a perfect network of processes, the many still to be discovered, not by human eyes but by intuitional vision. Finally I asked her to write what she thought of one of our walks together, not trying to remember what I had said—only expressing something of the activity which my words suggested."

The teacher nodded again. Her face had become saddened.

"I would not encourage her to become a writer," I repeated. "Expression of some sort is imperative. It is the right hand. We receive with the left, so to speak, but we must give something of our own for what we receive. It is the giving that completes the circle; the giving formulates, makes matter of vision, makes the dream come true. You know the tragedies of dreaming without expression. Even insanity comes of that. I have never told her matters of technique in writing, and was amazed to find that she has something that none of us grown-ups have, who are formed of our failures and drive our expression through an arsenal of laws and fears."

"Do you mean that you instruct her in nothing of technique?"

"I haven't—at least, not yet. I have hardly thought of it as instruction even."

"And spelling?"

"Her spelling is too novel. It would not do to spoil that. In fact, she is learning to spell and punctuate quite rapidly enough from reading. These matters are automatic. The world has taught men to spell rather completely. God knows we've had enough of it, to the abandonment of the real. I could misspell a word in every paragraph of a three-hundred-page manuscript without detriment to the reception of the same, all that being corrected without charge. There are men who can spell, whose God-given faculties have been taught to spell, who have met the world with freshness and power, and have learned to spell. I have no objection to correct spelling. I would rather have it than not, except from children. But these are things which a man does with the back of his neck, and he who does the constructive tasks of the world uses different and higher organs."

"I have taught much spelling," the teacher said quietly.

"You will forgive me for being so enthusiastic. These things are fresh to me," I said.

"The little girl is ten, you say?"

"Yes."

"She has a fine chance," the teacher remarked

presently. "It saddens me to think of my myriads. But we do our best——"

"That is one sure thing," I said quickly.

"Still you are taking her away from us."

I felt a throb of meaning from that. I had to be sure she meant just as much as that throb meant to me. Constructive realisations come this way.

"What do you mean—taking her away?"

"You will make a solitary of her. She will not be of the world. You deal with one lovingly. It will become more and more a part of your work. Your work is of a kind to show you the way. She is following rapidly. I believe you have established the point that one can learn best from within, but one who does, must be so much alone. The ways will be lost between her and her generation—as represented by my five classes each day."

I had done a good deal of talking, but the teacher had guided me straight to the crossing—and with very few words. I realised now that more and more, I was undertaking to show the little girl short cuts to possessions that I had found valuable, but for which I had been forced to go around, and often with difficulty. Above all, I was trying to keep open that dream-passage, to keep unclouded that lens between spirit and flesh through which fairies are seen and the lustrous connecting lines around all things. By every impulse I was arousing imagination—it is all said in

that. In doing this, was I also making a "solitary" of her—lifting her apart from the many?

There was no squirming out. I was doing exactly this; and if I went on, the job would be done more and more completely.

"She is not strange or different now," I said, "but see what will happen. She will find it harder and harder to stay. She will begin searching for those who liberate her. They are hard to find—not to be found among the many. Books and nature and her dreams—but the many will not follow her to these sources. . . . And yet every man and woman I know who are great to me, have entered this solitude in childhood. They were Solitaries—that seems the mark of the questers. . . . Why, you would not have one stay with the many—just to avoid the loneliness and the heart-pulling that leads us into ourselves. Everything done in the world that is loved and remembered—every life lived with beauty and productiveness to the many—has come from the Solitaries. *Quest*, that is the greatest word in English. One must have imagination to set out on the quest. . . . In reality we only search for our real selves—that which we yearn toward is the arousing of the half-gods within. When they are fully awake, we return to tell the many. Perhaps we do meet a more poignant suffering—but that is an honour——"

The teacher was smiling at me again. "Do you

not see," she asked, "that all that you do and say and teach is for those who have the essential imagination?"

"But children have it," I said.

5

WILD GEESE

I COULD not stay away entirely that winter. After a week or ten days of hard work, night-classes and furnace air—imagination would work to the extent that a day by the open fire was required. It seemed to me some days that I wanted a century of silence. . . . There was one bright cold Mid-March day, the northern shore still frozen a mile out. I had come forth from the city to smell wood-smoke, a spring symptom. It was now sunset. In the noble stillness, which for many moments had been broken only by the sagging of the dead ice, there came now a great cackling of geese, so that I looked up the lane a quarter of a mile to the nearest farmyard, wondering who had turned loose the collie pups. It hadn't occurred to me to look up; and that, when you come to think of it, is one of the tragedies of being city-bred.

Presently I had to. Voices of wild geese carry with astonishing force and accuracy. A hundred

yards ahead was the long-necked gander, with the lines of a destroyer, his wings sweeping more slowly because of their strength and gear, yet he was making the pace. Then came his second in command, also alone, and as far back again, the point of the V. In this case, the formation was uneven, the left oblique being twice as extended as the right. . . . They were all cackling, as I imagined, because of the open water ahead, for geese either honk or are silent in passage. They began to break just above, the formation shattering piece by piece as they swept on with wild ardour toward the ice-openings. Coming up from the thrall of the thing, I found my hat in hand.

It would shake any one. Indeed, there's a fine thrill in the flight of ducks—darting dwarfs compared to these standard-breds, whose pinions sweep but once to the triple-beat of the twinkling redheads and canvas-backs. You can tell the difference by the twinkle, when the distance over water confuses the eye as to size. Mighty twelve-pounders with a five-foot spread of wing, many of these, and with more than a suggestion of the swan's mystic grandeur in passing.

Somewhere back of memory, most of us have strange relations with the wild things. Something deeper than the beauty of them thrills. Moments of music stir these inward animations; or steaming for the first time into certain oriental harbours,

Suddenly we are estranged from the self, as we know it, and are greater beings. I feel as new as a tourist before Niagara or Montmorency, but as old as Paul and Silas in the presence of the Chinese Wall. The lips of many men, strange save to common sayings, are loosed to murmurings of deepest yearning before the spectacle of a full-rigged ship; and it matters not if, within memory, they have ever felt the tug of filling cloth in the timber underfoot, or crossed even an inland waterway without steam. It was this that the flight of geese gave me—a throb from the ancient and perennial romance of the soul.

Many a man goes gunning on the same principle, and thinks that the urge is game. It isn't so, unless he is a mere animated stomach; the many think they have come into their own as they go to sea, the vibration of the triple-screws singing along the keel. . . . They pass an iceberg or a derelict, some contour of tropical shore, a fishing fleet, or an old fore-and-after, and the steamer is a stifling modern metropolis after that—galley and stoke-hole its slums. Then and there, they vow some time *really* to go to sea.

Sing the song of steam—the romance of steel? There isn't any, yet. Generations hence, when the last turbine comes puffing into port, taking its place like a dingy collier in the midst of ether-driven hydroplanes—some youth on the water-front, perhaps, will turn his back on the crowd,

and from his own tossing emotions at sight of the old steamer—emotions which defy mere brain and scorn the upstart memory—will catch the coherent story of it all, and his expression will be the song of steam. For the pangs and passions of the Soul can only become articulate at the touch of some ancient reminder, which erects a magnificent distance of perspective, and permits to flood in the stillness of that larger time, whose crises are epochal and whose yesterdays are lives.

Waiting for the suburban car that night in the little Lake town, I mentioned the flying wedge.

"Why, those are Jack Miner's geese," remarked a voice of the waiting-room.

I ignored a reply. A local witticism past doubt—the cut-up of the place. Jack Miner, as I saw it, might own Pelee Island, Lake Erie or the District of Columbia, but no man's pronoun of possession has any business relation to a flock of wild geese, the same being about the wildest things we have left. I recalled the crippled goose which the farmer's boy chased around a hay-stack for the better part of a June afternoon, and only saw once; the goose being detained that particular once with the dog of the establishment. This dog ranged the countryside for many years thereafter, but couldn't be coaxed past a load of hay, and was even sceptical of corn-shocks. I knew, moreover, that the geese are shot at from the Gulf rice-

marshes to the icy Labradors; that they fly slightly higher since the common use of smokeless instead of black powder.

Yet the stranger hadn't been humorous. Any of his fellow townsmen would have made the same remark. In fact, I had the good fortune a few weeks afterward to see several hundred wild geese playing and feeding on Jack Miner's farm—within a hundred feet of his doorstep, many of them.

Years ago, a winter came on to stay before the corn was all in—a patch of corn on a remote back-field of Jack Miner's farm. A small flock of geese flying North in March, knew as much about the loss as Jack did. A farm-hand was first to note their call, and got such a case of *wanderlust* when he observed the geese that he kept on going without return to the house. He wrote, however, this significant news:

"Jack: Wild guse on your pleace. Leve corn on wood-lot. Ile come back mabe. Steve."

Jack Miner did just that; and the next year he left the corn a little nearer the house and so on. Meanwhile he made a law that you couldn't come onto his place with a shotgun. He couldn't stop the townspeople from taking a shot at the small flocks as they passed over, from the farm feeding ground to the Lake, but the geese didn't seem to expect that of Jack. He says they would miss it, if the shooting stopped, and get stale; and then it

does a similar lot for the town in the critical month of April.

Finally Jack built a large concrete pond on his house acres, leaving much corn on the clean marges. He has a strong heart to wait with. The geese "had him" when he first carried forth the corn, but it was a year or two afterward before a daring young gander and pair made a hasty drop. For once there was no chorus of "I-told-you-so's," from the wiser heads cocked stiff as cattails from the low growth of the surrounding fields. That was the second beginning.

The system has been cumulative ever since, and in something like this order: fifteen, forty, one hundred and fifty, four hundred, six hundred—in five years. The geese never land all at once in the artificial pond—some watching as far back as from the remote wood-lot, others in the south fields across the road. Jack Miner feeds five bushels of corn a day and would like to feed fifteen.

"A rich man can afford a few geese," he remarked, "but it takes a poor man to feed six hundred."

He asked the Canadian Government for one hundred dollars the year to help feed the geese, but the formidable process entailed to get it evidently dismayed Ottawa at the outset, for it didn't go through. An automobile magnate came over from the States recently. The substance of his call didn't leak out. In any event, Jack Miner

is still managing his brick-kiln. Bird-fanciers come nowadays in season from all over the States and Provinces, and Jack feeds them too. Meantime, we Lake folk who come early enough to the Shore to see the inspiring flocks flying overland to the water in the beginnings of dusk, and hear them out on the Lake where they moor at night, a bed-time music that makes for strange dreaming—we know well what kind of a gift to the community Jack Miner is; and we are almost as sorry as he, when the keen, hardy Norse blood of the birds calls them forth from the May balm.

Of course, Jack is an individual. He has time to plant roses as well as corn. At luncheon to-day, there was an armful of red roses on the table from Jack Miner's. He had sent them three miles in hay time, and didn't know that I had spent the morning in writing about his geese. He has time to tempt thousands of smaller birds to his acreage. It's one seething bird-song there. Besides, he makes a fine brick. You'd expect him to be a workman. . . . But the wild geese are a part of his soul.

"I've watched them for a good many years now," he told me. "I've seen them tackle a man, a bull, a team, and stand against the swoop of an eagle. Two ganders may be hard as swordsmen at each other, when they're drawing off their flocks, but they'll stand back to back against any outsider. Yes, I've watched them a long time, and I've

never yet seen them do anything a man would be ashamed of. Why, I'd like to see the wild goose on the back of the Canadian flag!"

I wondered if Canada were worthy, but didn't say so.

It is rather too fine an event to go often to Jack Miner's. The deeper impressions are those which count, and such are spontaneous. They do not come at call. One feels as if breaking into one of the natural mysteries—at first glimpse of the huge geese so near at hand—a spectacle of beauty and speed not to be forgotten. They are built long and clean. Unlike the larger fliers as a whole, they need little or no run to rise; it is enough to say that they rise from the water. You can calculate from that the marvellous strength of pinion. And they are continental wing-rangers that know the little roads of men, as they know the great lakes and waterways and mountain chains—Jack Miner's door-yard and Hudson's Bay.

"I'd give a lot to see one right close, Jack," said I.

"You don't have to. Come on."

He took me to a little enclosure where a one-winged gander was held.

"He came home to me with a wing broken one Sunday," said Jack. "It was heavy going, but he managed to get here. I thought at first we'd have some goose, but we didn't. The fact is, I was sort of proud that he came home in his trouble. I took

the wing off, as you see. He's doing fine, but he tried to drink himself to death, as they all do. That appears to be the way they fix a broken wing. It may be the fever or the pain; anyway, they'll drink until they die. I kept this fellow dry, until he healed."

The splendid gamester stretched out his black head and hissed at me—something liquid and venomous in the sound—the long black beak as fine and polished as a case for a girl's penknife. He was game to the core and wild as ever. . . . Jack hadn't let him die—perhaps he felt out of the law because of that.

"I'll go and do my chores," Jack Miner said. "You can stay and think it out."

I knew from that how well he understood the same big thing out of the past which the wild bird meant to me. He had the excellent delicacy which comes from experience, to leave me there alone.

An hysterical gabble broke the contemplation. Waddling up from behind was a tame goose. The shocking thing was too fat and slow to keep itself clean—its head snubbed, its voice crazily pitched, its wings gone back to a rudiment, its huge food-apparatus sagging to the ground, straining to lay itself against the earth, like a billiard-ball in a stocking full of feathers.

And before me was the Magnificent, one that had made his continental flights, fasting for them, as saints fast in aspiration—lean and long, power-

ful and fine in brain and beak and wing—an admirable adversary, an antagonist worthy of eagles, ready for death rather than for captivity. . . . All that Gibbon ever wrote stood between this game bird and its obscene relative dragging its liver about a barnyard—the rise and fall of the Roman, and every other human and natural, empire—the rise by toil and penury and aspiration, and the fall to earth again in the mocking ruins of plenty. . . .

Good Jack Miner expressed the same, but in his own way, when he came back from the chores.

6

WORKMANSHIP

AS related, I had seen the Lake-front property first in August. The hollows were idealised into sunken gardens, while the mason was building the stone study. We returned in April—and the bluff was like a string of lakes. The garden in the rear had been ploughed wrong. Rows of asparagus were lanes of still water, the roots cut off from their supply of air. Moreover, the frogs commented in concert upon our comings and goings. . . . I set about the salvage alone, and as I worked thoughts came. Do you know the suction of clay—the weight of adhering clay to a shovel? You can lift a stone and drop it, but the substance goes out of a city man's nerve when he lifts a shovel of clay and finds it united in a stubborn bond with the implement. I went back to the typewriter, and tried to keep up with the gang of ditchers who came and tiled the entire piece. It was like healing the sick to see the water go off, but a bad day for the

frogs in the ponds where the bricks had been made.

"You'll be surprised at the change in the land which this tiling will make in one season," the boss told me. "It will turn over next corn-planting time like a heap of ashes."

That's the general remark. Good land turns over like a heap of ashes.

I would hardly dare to tell how I enjoyed working in that silent cave of red firelight. Matters of craftsmanship were continually in my thoughts —especially the need in every human heart of producing something. Before the zest is utterly drained by popular din from that word "efficiency," be reminded that the good old word originally had to do with workmanship and not with dollar-piling. . . . The world is crowded with bad workmen. Much of its misery and cruelty is the result of bad workmanship, which in its turn results from the lack of imagination. A man builds his character in his work; through character alone is the stamina furnished to withstand with dignity the heavy pressures of life.

. . . I arranged with a neighbour to do some work for me. In fact he asked for the work, and promised to come the next Tuesday. He did not appear. Toward the end of the week following I passed him in the lane that leads down to the Lake—a tall, tired man, sitting beside a huge stone, his back against a Lombard poplar, a shotgun across his knees.

"I thought I'd wait here, and see if I couldn't hit one of them geese," he explained, as I came up.

It seemed I had never seen such a tired face. His eyes were burning like the eyes of a sentry, long unrelieved, at the outpost of a city. . . . The geese ride at mooring out in the Lake at night. I have fallen asleep listening to their talk far out in the dark. But I have never seen them fly overland before sunset, which was two hours away at the time I passed up the lane. I do not know how long Monte had been sitting there.

Now except for the triviality of the promise, I had no objection to his not working for me, and no objection to his feeding his family, thus first-handed, though very little breast of the game wild goose comes to the board of such as he. . . . I was on the way to the forge of a workman. I wanted a knocker for an oaken door; and I wanted it just so. Moreover, I knew the man who would make it for me.

At the head of the lane, still on the way, I met a farmer, who had not missed the figure propped between the stone and the poplar tree. He said that the last time Monte had borrowed his gun, he had brought it back fouled. That was all he said.

I passed Monte's house, which is the shocking depression of a prosperous community. There were many children—a stilled and staring lot.

They sat in dust upon the ground. They were not waiting for goose. Their father had never inspired them with expectancy of any sort; their mother would have spoiled a goose, had it been brought by a neighbour. She came to the door as I passed, spilled kitchen refuse over the edge of the door-stone, and vanished. The children seemed waiting for death. The virtue of father-hood is not to be measured numerically. . . . April was nearly over, but the unsightly heaps that the snows had covered were not yet cleared away. Humped, they were, among the children. This is a world-old picture—one that need not be finished.

Monte was not a good shot, not a good workman, not a good father—a burden and bad odour everywhere, a tainter of the town and the blood of the human race. That, which was gathered about him was as pitifully bred as reared. Monte's one value lay in his horrible exemplarship. He was a complete slum microcosm, without which no civilisation has yet arrived. Monte has given me more to think about than any of the happier people. In his own mute way, he reminds each man of the depths, furnishes the low mark of the human sweep, and keeps us from forgetting the world as it is, the myriads of bad workmen of which the leaning cities are made.

Sitting there by the rock, letting the hours go by—and in his own weak heart, my neighbour knew that he wouldn't "hit one of them geese."

All his life he had failed. Nature had long since ceased trying to tempt him into real production. Even his series of natural accidents was doubtless exhausted. That is the pace that kills—that sitting.

I went on to the forge of the workman. We talked together. I sat by while he made the thing I wanted, which was not an ornament simply. He will always be identified there in the oak, an excellent influence; just as I think of him when I save the wood in the open fireplace, because of the perfect damper he made for the stone chimney. Monte was still there when I went back. The problem of him returned to mind after the freshening of the forge.

He belongs to us as a people, and we have not done well by him. We did not help him to find his work. We did not consider his slowness, nor the weariness of his flesh, the sickness he came with, nor the impoverishment of his line. We are not finding their work for his children. We have sent them home from school because they were not clean. We complain that they waste what we give them; that they are harder on the shoes we furnish, than are our own children. We do not inquire with wisdom into their life, to learn on which side of the human meridian they stand—whether their disease is decadence and senility of spiritual life, or whether their spines are but freshly lifted from the animal levels.

As a purely physical aggregate—if our civilisation be that—our business is quickly to exterminate Monte and his whole breed. He embarrasses us, as sleeker individuals of the herd and hive. He is tolerated to the diseases with which he infects us, because we have weakened our resistance with cleanliness. But by the authority of our better understanding, by our sacred writings and the intuitions of our souls, we are men and no longer an animal aggregate. As men, our business is to lift Monte from his lowly condition, and hold him there; to make him and his children well first, and then to make workmen of them. *There are workmen in the world for this very task of lifting Monte and his brood.* We do not use them, because the national instinct of Fatherhood is not yet profoundly developed. We are not yet brothers.

In the recent winter months in the city it came to me that I had certain things to tell a group of young men. The class was arranged. In the beginning I warned them not to expect literary matters; that I meant to offer no plan to reach the short-story markets (a game always rather deep for me); that the things which I wanted to tell were those which had helped me toward being a man, not an artist. Fifteen young men were gathered—all strangers to me. When we were really acquainted, weeks afterward, I discovered that seven of the fifteen had been writing for months

or years—that there was certain stuff in the seven that would write or die.

They had not come for what I meant to give. As a whole they were indifferent at first to my idea of the inner life. They had come for the gleanings I would drop, because I could not help it, having spent twenty years learning how to learn to write. The name that had called them from the different parts of the city was identified for good or bad in their minds with the work they meant to do. And what I did for them was done as a workman—that was my authority—a workman, a little older, a little farther along in the craft that called.

And to every workman there are eager apprentices, who hunger to know, not his way, but the way. Every workman who does the best he can, has a store of value for the younger ones, who are drawn, they know not why, to the production he represents. Moreover, the workman would learn more than he could give, but he is not called. He seldom offers himself, because the laugh of the world has already maimed him deeply. . . . I had told them austerely what I would do for them, and what I would not do; but I did more and more what they really asked, for therein and not elsewhere I had a certain authority. More and more accurately I learned to furnish what they came for. All my work in the study alone was to do just that for a larger class, and in this effort I stumbled

upon the very heart of the fatherhood ideal and the educational ideal—for they are one and the same.

A man is at his best in those periods in which self-interest is lost to him. The work in which a man can lose the sense of self for the most hours each day—that is his especial task. When the workman gives forth the best that is in him, not feeling his body, above all its passions and petty devices for ruling him, concentrated upon the task, a pure instrument of his task and open to all inspiration regarding it—that man is safe and superb. There is something holy in the crafts and arts. It is not an accident that a painting lives three hundred years. We are not permitted to forget the great potters, the great metallists, the rug and tapestry makers. They put themselves in their tasks, and we are very long in coming to the end of their fineness.

They produced. They made their dreams come true in matter; and that is exactly what our immortal selves are given flesh to perform. Each workman finds in his own way the secret of the force he represents. He is an illuminated soul in this discovery. It comes only to a man when he is giving forth, when he is in love, having lost the love of self. Giving forth purely the best of self, as the great workmen do, a man is on the highway to the divine vocation which is the love and service of humanity.

. . . They begin to call him twenty minutes before dinner is ready. He is caught in the dream of the thing and has little time to bargain for it. He feels for his glasses, when you call him forth; he sweats; he listens to the forge that calls him. The unfinished thing is not only on his bench, but in his mind—in its weakness, half-born and uncouth. . . . "Talk to my daughter. She knows about these things," he says. "I must go. . . . Yes, it is a fine day."

It is raining like as not. . . . And because the world has laughed at him so long, he has forgotten how to tell his story by the time he has perfected his task. The world laughs at its betters with the same facility that it laughs at the half-men. Our national and municipal fathers should teach us first that the man who has found his work is one of the kings of the earth. Children should be taught to know a workman anywhere. All excellence in human affairs should be judged by the workmanship and not by the profits.

We are neighbourhoods in name only. How often has our scorn for some strange little man changed to excited appreciation, when the world came at last to his shop with its sanctions of money and noisy affairs. He is nervous and ill at ease. His world has ceased to laugh. He wonders at that; asks himself if this praise and show is not a new kind of laughter, for he cannot forget the grinding and the rending of the early years—when

there were days in which he doubted even his work. Perhaps his has been a divided house all these years; it may be that he has lost even Her for his work.

The world has left him richer, but he is not changed, and back to the shop again. A man's work lives with him to the end—and beyond—that is the eternal reason of its importance. . . . All quandaries cease; all doubts sink into the silence; the task assumes once more; his real life is awake; the heart of reality throbs for him, adjusting the workman to an identity which cannot grow old.

He may not know this miracle of fine workmanship. This that has come to him from the years of truth, may not be a possible expression from his lips, but he knows in his heart one of the highest truths of here below: That nothing which the world can give is payment for fine workmanship; that the world is never so vulgar as when it thinks it can pay in money for a life's task. The workman can only be paid in kind.

It is not the product that men use that holds the immortal result. They may come to his shop fifty years after he has left it; they may cross seas and continents to reach this shop, saying: "This is where he did it. His bench was just there—his house over yonder. Here is where he stood, and there he hung his coat." But these are only refinements of irony. . . . They may say, "This is his

grandson." But that will only handicap or ruin the child, if he find not *his* work. A thousand lesser workmen may improve his product, lighten it, accelerate its potency, adapt it to freight rates —but that is no concern of the dream.

The payment of it all, the glory of it all, is that the real workman finds himself. His soul has awakened. In the trance of his task, he has lost the love of self which the world knows, and found the blessedness of the source of his being. He does not need to state it philosophically, for he lived it. He found the secret of blessedness, if not of happiness. At his bench, he integrated the life that lasts. He could have told you in the early years, if the world had not laughed. He would have learned himself more swiftly, had he been encouraged to tell, as he toiled—if the world had not shamed away the few who were drawn to his bench.

But alone, he got it all at last—the passion and power of the spiritual workman which sustains him now, though his body has lain under the hill for fifty years. His shop is the place of a greater transaction than his task. The breadth and essence of it that lingers makes it a sacred place to the few who would take off their shoes to enter—were it not for the misunderstanding of the world.

Out of the artificial he became natural; out of the workman, he emerged a man, a living soul.

I would support every plan or dream of educa-

tion, and none other, that seeks to find for the youth his life work. I would call upon every workman personally to help; and urge for every community, the goodness of its products and not the richness of its markets. I would put the world's premium upon fine workmanship of the hand or brain or spirit; and a stiff pressure upon the multiplication of these products by mechanical means, for we have too many common things, and so few fine things. I would inculcate in the educational ideal, first of all, that in every man there is a dream, just as there is a soul, and that *to express the dream of the soul in matter* is the perfect individual performance. I would impress upon the youth that in all arts and crafts, the dream fades and the spirit of the product dies away, when many are made in the original likeness. Nature does not make duplicates; her creative hall-mark is upon every leaf and bee; upon every cliff and cloud and star.

I would not endow the young workman while he is learning his trade or art; but I would have the State intensely watchful of him, and impassioned with parental conviction that her greatness is inseparable with his possibilities of achievement. I would not make his ways short, but despise and crush all evidences of facility. I would keep him plain and lean and fit, and make him earn his peace. All fine work comes from the cultivation of the self, not from cultivated environment. . . .

I dreamed for twenty years of a silent room and an open wood fire. I shall never cease to wonder at the marvel of it, now that it has come. It is so to-night alone in the stillness. The years of struggle to produce in the midst of din and distraction, while they wore as much as the work itself, were helpful to bring the concentration which every decent task demands; and in the thrill of which a man grows in reality, and not otherwise.

7

THE LITTLE GIRL

IT was determined that the children should try the country-town school that Spring from April to June. This school was said to be of exceptional quality, and I talked with the master, a good man. In fact, there was none but the general causes for criticism in this establishment—the same things I found amiss in city schools. The children accepted the situation with a philosophy of obedience which should have taught the race many things it does not yet know. The journey was considerable for them twice daily in warming weather; and from little things I heard from time to time, words dropped with no idea of rebellion, I was reminded of the dark drama of my own "Education," written explicitly enough elsewhere and which I am glad to forget.

The schools of to-day are better, no doubt about that, but the improvement is much in the way of facility and convenience; the systems are not structurally changed—facility and convenience, speed

of transit, mental short-cuts, the science of making things not more plain, but more obvious, the science of covering ground. . . .

I read a book recently written by a woman who mothered an intellectual child of cormorant appetite. That child learned everything in sight from fairies to grease-traps. What was difficult to manage in that mass of whipcord mental fibre, was put into verse and sung. The book told how the child was nourished on all things that only specialists among men cared to litter their minds with. Then there was a supplement of additional assimilations, and how to get them in. With all this, the child had been taught to dance; and there was a greed of learning about it (the book being designed to show the way to others) that struck me as avarice of the most violent and perverse form; the avarice of men for money and baronial holdings being innocent compared, as sins of the flesh are innocent compared to the sins of mind. This book and the tragic child form to my idea one of the final eruptions of the ancient and the obscene.

The word education as applied in this woman's book, and through the long past of the race, represents a diagram of action with three items:

One, the teacher; 2, the book; 3, the child. Teacher extracting fact from book and inserting same in child's brain equals education.

I suffered ten years of this, entering aged six, and leaving the passage aged sixteen, a cruel young

monster filled with rebellion and immorality, not educated at all, but full of the sense of vague failures, having in common with those of my years, all the levels of puerile understanding, stung with patronage and competitive strife, designed to smother that which was real in the heart.

Very securely the prison-house had closed upon me, but please be very sure that I am not blaming teachers. Many of them met life as it appeared, and made the best of conditions. There were true teachers among them, women especially who would have ascended to genius in their calling, had they been born free and in a brighter age. They were called upon, as now, to dissipate their values in large classes of children, having time to see none clearly, and the powers above dealt them out the loaf that was to be cut. The good teacher in my day was the one who cut the loaf evenly—to every one his equal part. The first crime was favoritism. . . .

I sat here recently with a little class of six young people ranging in age from eleven to twenty. Side by side were a girl of seventeen and a boy of fourteen, who required from me handling of a nature diametrically opposite. The approaches to their hearts were on opposite sides of the mountain. Yet they had been coming for three months before I acutely sensed this. The girl had done very well in school. She was known to be bright; and yet, I found her all caught in

rigidities of the brain, tightly corseted in mental forms of the accepted order. Her production was painfully designed to meet the requirements of her time and place; the true production of her nature was not only incapable of finding expression, but it was not even in a state of healthful quiesence. It was pent, it was dying of confinement, it was breathing with only a tithe of its tissue.

The wonderful thing about youth is that it answers.

The boy next had not done well in school. The word *dreamer* was designated to the very thought of him. Yet this boy had awed me—the mute might of him. One day I talked for fifteen minutes and abruptly told him to bring in the next day, written, what had struck him, if anything, in what I had said. He brought me in two thousand words of almost phenomenal reproduction—and yet he had listened sleepily. Of course, I did not care to develop his reportorial instinct after this display. My work was to develop his brain to express the splendid inner voltage of the boy, just as certainly as I had found it necessary to repress the brain and endeavour to free the spirit of the girl. I will come to this individual study again. It is my point here merely to show how helpless even great vision must be to the needs of the individual, in classes of youths and children ranging as they do in crowded schools.

I had been one who thought my own work most important—to the exclusion even of the rights of others. For instance when the Old Man (as he is affectionately designated) went to the Study, he was not to be disturbed. All matters of domestic order or otherwise must be carried on without him in these possessed and initialed hours. After dinner the Old Man had to read and rest; later in the afternoon, there was the Ride and the Garden, and in the evening, letters and possibly more production. At meal-time he was available, but frequently in the tension of food and things to do. . . . As I see it now, there was a tension everywhere—tension wherever the Old Man appeared, straining and torturing his own tasks, had he only known it.

The little girl dared to tread where the older ones had been so well-taught to hold back. One of the first vacation mornings she joined him on the path to the Study and lured him down to the beach. It was the time of day for the first smoke, the smoke of all. Now the Old Man was accustomed to enter the Study, sweep the hearth with his own hands, regard the bow of shore-line from the East window—the Other Shore—for a moment; scrutinise the copy of the day or night before, for the continuity of the present day, light the pipe and await the impulse of production. Many years of work had ordained this order; many hard lessons resulting from breaking the

point of the day's work before sitting down to it; many days that had been spoiled by a bite too much breakfast, or by a distraction at the critical moment.

However, the Old Man was down on the beach with a little girl of ten who wanted to talk. She wanted to know about the shells and waves, what ridged the sand, and what the deep part of the Lake was paved with. The answers were judicious. Presently he was talking about things nearer the front of mind, about the moon and tides, the tides of the sea, in this Lake, in teacups, in the veins of plants and human blood—the backward and forward movement of everything, the ebb and flow everywhere—in short, the Old Man was discussing the very biggest morsel of all life—vibration. He arose and started up the bank.

"Don't go yet," the little girl called.

"Wait," said he. "I'm coming back. I want to get my pipe."

There was a mist in the morning, and the big stone where she sat was still cool from the night before. The South Wind which has a sweetness of its own was just ruffling the Lake; there had been rain, and it was Summer. The smell of the land was there—the perfume of the Old Mother herself which is the perfume of the tea-rose—the blend of all that springs into being.

"Sometimes you catch her as she is," the Old Man said. "Now to-day she smells like a tea-

rose. I don't mean the smell of any particular plant, but the breath of all—as if old Mother Nature were to pass, and you winded the beauty of her garments. At night, sometimes she smells like mignonette—not like mignonette when you hold it close to your face, but when the wind brings it."

He found this very interesting to himself, because he had not thought about it just so. He found also that a man is dependent for the quality of his product upon the nature of his listener, just as much as the seed is dependent upon the soil. It is true a man can go on producing for years in the quiet without talking to any one, but he doubles on his faults, and loses more and more the wide freedom of his passages. Here was a wrinkled forehead to warn one that the expression wasn't coming clearly, or when the tension returned. The Other Shore was faintly glorified in her morning veil.

"We'll go back to the Study and write some of these things we've seen and talked about," the Old Man said at length. "You see they're not yours until you express them. And the things you express, as I expressed them, are not yours either. What you want to express is the things *you* get from all this. The value of that is that no one else can do it."

She went willingly, sat in a corner of the Study.

The Old Man forgot her in a moment.

That was the real beginning.

Presently she came every morning. . . . I (to return to first person again) had been led to believe that any outside influence in a man's Study is a distraction; not alone the necessary noise and movement of the other, but the counter system of thinking. I perceived little difference, however. I had no fewer *good* mornings than formerly; and yet, any heavy or critical attitudes of mind would have been a steady and intolerable burden. In fact, I believe that there was a lift in her happiness and naturalness. It came to me so often that she belonged there.

She remained herself absolutely. She had never been patronised. Recently with six young people in the Study, I suddenly thought of the relation of teacher to student in a finer light. I was impelled to say to them:

"I do not regard you from any height. You are not to think of yourselves as below. It might happen that in a few years—this relation might be changed entirely even by the youngest of you. The difference between us now is merely a matter of a decade or two. You have more recently come in; things are strange to you. Intrinsically you may be far greater than I, but we do not deal with comparisons. We are friends; we are all one. I sit in the midst of you—telling you from day to day of the things I have learned about this place, having come here with an earlier caravan. My first

years here were of rapid learning, as yours will be. Presently the doors will shut upon my new impressions, but you will go on. When you reach your best, you may smile at your childish fancies of how much I knew. You will always be kind in your thoughts of these early days, for that is the deep law of good men and women; indeed one must reverence one's teacher, for the teacher is the symbol of Nature, of Mother, of Giving. But there must be equality first. My brain is somehow filled now; the time will come when yours is more filled than mine with the immediate matters of our life. For children become old, and the old become children, if their days are happy. After all, the immediate matters of our present life are of astonishingly small account, in relation to the long life—the importance only of one bead on the endless string. So I would have you know that the differences between us that have to do with this single life-adventure are of very slight moment—that we really are the sum of innumerable adventures, the lessons of which form us, and only a little of which we have yet learned to tell."

I had something of this attitude when the little girl came alone, and I believe it to be important. A sense of it in the teacher's mind (and the more one thinks of it, the less it appears an affectation) will help to bring about that equality between the young and the old which the recent generations did

not possess, and from the absence of which much deformity and sorrow has come to be.

The little girl could quickly understand from the rapt moments of her own production, how disordering a thing it is to bring foreign matter to one's mental solution in an abrupt fashion. She saw that the organisation of ideas for expression is a delicate process; that it never occurs twice the same, and that the genuine coherence is apt to be at its best in the first trial, for one of the essences of the rapture of production is the novelty of the new relation. There were times in the forenoons when I met halting stages and was ready possibly to banter a moment. I very quickly encountered a repulse, if she were in the thrall. She would wave her hand palm outward before her face—a mistake of meaning impossible.

Now she had only learned to write two years before, this detail purposely postponed. I did not undertake to correct spelling, permitting her to spell phonetically, and to use a word she was in doubt of. What I wanted her to do was to say the things in her soul—if the expression can be forgiven.

I believe (and those who do not believe something of the kind will not find the forthcoming ideas of education of any interest) that there is a sleeping giant within every one of us; a power as great in relation to our immediate brain faculties, as the endless string is great in relation

to one bead. I believe that every great moment of expression in poetry and invention and in every craft and bit of memorable human conduct, is significant of the momentary arousing of this sleeping giant within. I believe that modern life and modern education of the faculties of brain and memory are unerringly designed to deepen the sleep of this giant. I believe, under the influence of modern life on a self-basis, and modern education on a competitive basis, that the prison-house closes upon the growing child—that more and more as the years draw on, the arousing of the sleeping giant becomes impossible; that the lives of men are common on account of this, because the one perfect thing we are given to utter remains unexpressed.

I believe by true life and true education that the prison-house can be prevented from closing upon the growing child; that the giant is eager to awake; that, awakened, he makes the thoughts, the actions, the smiles and the words of even a child significant.

I believe that an ordinary child thus awakened within, not only can but must become an extraordinary man or woman. This has already been proved for me in the room in which I write. I believe that this very awakening genius is the thing that has made immortal—shoemakers, blacksmiths and the humblest men who have brought truth and beauty to our lives from the

past. Moreover the way, although it reverses almost every process of life and education that now occupies our life and race, is not hard, but a way of beauty and joyousness, and the way is no secret.

8

THE ABBOT

HE was a still boy—the boy who had first shown us the two cottages on the shore the afternoon his father was ill. You would have thought him without temperament. I often recalled how little he knew about the affairs of prospective tenants that afternoon; and how Penelope rescued me from his silences. . . . We saw him often, coming down to bathe with another lad during the afternoons throughout that first summer, but drew no nearer to acquaintance. Sometimes as I rode to town for mail in the evening I would see him watching me from his walk or porch; and the sense that his regard was somehow different, I believe, did impress me vaguely. It all happened in a leisurely sort of ordained fashion. I remember his "hello," cheerful but contained, as I would ride by. He was always still as a gull, and seemed natural with the dusk upon him. . . . One day his father said to me:

"I have to buy everything you write for him."

"Well, well," said I.

I had not looked for market in the little town, and The Abbot was only fourteen. (One of the older boys christened him The Abbot afterward, because he seemed so freshly come from monastic training.) . . . Finally I heard he was interested in the stars and owned a telescope. I called him over to the Study one day, and we talked star-stuff. He had done all that I had and more. It appears that in his Sunday School paper when he was seven or eight, there had been an astronomical clipping of some sort that awakened him. He had it read to him several times, but his own reading picked up at that time with an extraordinary leap, as any study does under driving interest. Presently he was out after the star books on his own hook. He suggested bringing his telescope to the Study, and that night I got my first look at the ineffable isolation of Saturn. It was like some magnetic hand upon my breast. I could not speak. Every time I shut my eyes afterward I saw that bright gold jewel afar in the dark. We talked. . . . Presently I heard that he hated school, but this did not come from him. The fact is, I heard little or nothing from him.

This generation behind us—at least, the few I have met and loved—is not made up of explainers. They let you find out. They seem able to wait. It is most convincing, to have events clean

up a fact which you misunderstood; to have your doubts moved aside, not by words, nor any glibness, but leisurely afterward by the landmarks of solid matter. He did not come to the Study unless called for. The little girl brought in word from him from time to time, and the little girl's mother, and the boy's father—a very worthy man. I heard again that he was not doing well in school. I knew he was significant, very much so, having met the real boy on star-matters. I knew that the trouble was they were making him look down at school, when he wanted to look up. His parents came over to dinner one day, and I said:

"You'd better let the boy come to me every day."

It was an impulse. I don't know to this hour why I said it, because at that time I wasn't altogether sure that I was conducting the little girl's education on the best possible basis. Moreover, it seemed to me even then that my own time was rather well filled. Neither his father nor mother enthused, and I heard no more from the subject for many days. Meeting The Abbot finally, I asked him what of school.

"It's bad. I'm not doing anything. I hate it."

"Did your father think I didn't mean what I said—about you coming to me for a time?"

"I don't think he quite thought you meant it. And then he doesn't know what it would cost."

I told him it wouldn't cost anything. There

was a chance to talk with his father again, but nothing came of that, and The Abbot was still suffering weeks afterward. Finally his father and uncle came over to the Study. It seemed impossible for them to open the subject. I had to do it after an hour's conversation about immediate and interesting matters of weather and country.

"I would like to try him," I said. "He can come an hour after dinner each day. He is different. They can't bring him out, when they have to deal with so many."

"He's a dreamer," they said, as if confessing a curse.

It appears that there had been a dreamer in this family, a well-read man whose acres and interests had got away from him, long ago.

"That's why I want him," said I.

"But the thing is, we don't want him—a——"

"I know, you don't want an ineffectual. You want some dreams to come true—even if they are little ones——"

"Yes."

I had my own opinion of a boy who could chart his own constellations, without meeting for years any one who cared enough about the stars to follow his processes, but one can't say too much about a boy to his relatives. Then I had to remember that the little Lake town had only touched me on terms of trade. They did not know what sort of devil lived in my heart, and those who

were searching my books to find out were in the main only the more doubtful. Especially, I bewildered these men by not asking for anything in the way of money.

However, the thing came to be.

My first idea was to take him alone—the little girl coming in the morning with me, and the boy after dinner, during an hour that I had been accustomed to read and doze. The first days were hard for us both. I sat down in a big chair before the fire and talked with him, but there was no sign. He stared at the stones and stared out of the window, his eyes sometimes filmy, his body sometimes tense. I seemed to require at first some sort of recognition that I was talking—but none came, neither nod of acquiescence, look of mystification nor denial. . . . They said as he passed the house farther along the Shore after leaving the Study, that his head was bowed and that he walked like a man heavy with years.

I tried afresh each day—feared that I was not reaching him. I told him the things that had helped me through the darker early years, and some of the things I had learned afterward that would have helped me had I known enough. I tried different leads, returning often to the stars, but couldn't get a visible result. He was writing little things for me at this time and, though I detected something in the work more than he

showed me, sitting opposite in the Study, his writing was turgid and unlit—like one playing on an instrument he did not understand; indeed, it was like a man talking in his sleep. At the end of one of the talks within the first week, at wit's end as to what I was accomplishing, I said:

"Write me what you remember of what I said to-day."

I touched upon this earlier. The result shocked me—it came back like a phonograph, but the thoughts were securely bound by his own understanding. I once listened to a series of speeches of welcome from members of the Japanese Imperial court to a group of foreigners in Tokyo. The interpreter would listen for several minutes and then in the pause of the speaker put the fragment into English for us, without a colour of his own, without disturbing even a gesture or an intonation of the source of eloquence and ideation. Something of the same returned to me from the boy's work. I tried him again on the plan a few days later—just to be sure. The result was the same.

I have not done that since, because I do not wish to encourage physical memory, an impermanent and characterless faculty, developed to excess in every current theory of education. You cannot lift or assist another, if your hands are full of objects of your own. One puts aside his belongings, when called upon to do something

with his hands for another. Free-handed, he may succeed. It is the same with the mind. One's faculties are not open to revelations from the true origin of all values, if one's brain is clutching, with all its force, objects that the volition calls upon to be remembered. The memory is temporal; if this were not so, we would know the deeps of that great bourne from which we come. No man is significant in any kind of expression when he is using merely his temporal faculties. Time ruptures the products of these faculties as it does the very body and instrument that produces them.

However, I realised that I had an almost supernatural attention from the lad who did not deign to grant me even a nod of acquiescence. I began to tell him a few things about the technical end of writing for others to read. I encountered resistance here. Until I pressed upon them a little, the same mistakes were repeated. This should have shown me before it did that the boy's nature was averse to actual fact-striving—that he could grasp a concept off the ground far easier than to watch his steps on the ground—that he could follow the flight of a bird, so to speak, with far more pleasure than he could pick up pins from the earth, even if permitted to keep the pins. I was so delighted to awaken the giant, however, that I was inclined to let pass, for the present, the matters of fact and technicality.

Finding that he listened so well—that it was merely one of the inexplicable surfaces of the new generation that dismayed me—I, of course, learned to give to him more and more freely. I allowed myself to overlap somewhat each day, gave little or no thought as to what I should say to him until the hour came. I was sleepy from old habit at first, but that passed. Presently it occurred to me that things were happening in the Study with the boy, that the little girl could ill afford to miss; and also that he would feel more at ease if I could divide my attention upon him with another, so I rearranged her plans somewhat, and there were two.

As I recall, The Abbot had been coming about three weeks, when I related certain occult teachings in regard to the stars; matters very far from scientific astronomy which conducts its investigations almost entirely from a physical standpoint. You may be sure I did not speak authoritatively, merely as one adding certain phases I had found interesting of an illimitable subject. The next day he slipped in alone and a bit early, his "hello" hushed. I looked up and he said, almost trembling:

"I had a wonderful night."

The saying was so emotional for him that I was excited as in the midst of great happenings.

"Tell me," I said, drawing nearer.

"It's all here," he replied, clearing his voice.

His own work follows, with scarcely a touch of editing. The Abbot called his paper—

A VOICE THROUGH A LENS

Some people say that by thinking hard of a thing in the day-time, you may dream about it. Perhaps this that I had last night was a dream, but it was more than a stomach dream. I like to think it was a true vision. Before bedtime I was reading out of two books; a little pamphlet on astronomy containing the nebular theory, and another that told about the planetary chain.

The planetary chain was a continuation of the nebular theory, but in the spiritual form. It was that which threw me into the vision. I was away from the world; not in the physical form but in another—the first time I have ever lost my physical body. When I awoke from the vision, I had my clothes still on.

As I drifted off into that mighty sleep, the last thing I heard on earth was my mother playing and singing, "The Shepherd's Flute." It dulled my worldly senses and I slowly drifted away into the pleasant spiritual valley. Who could drift off in a more beautiful way than that? . . .

I was gradually walking up the side of a large mountain to an observatory of splendour. The turret was crowned with gold. As I opened the door and stepped inside, I saw a large telescope and a few chairs. The observer's chair was upholstered with velvet. It was not a complicated observatory like the worldly ones. . . . I removed the cap of the great telescope, covering the object-glass, and then uncovered the eye-piece. As

I looked around the heavens to find the great spiral of planets (the planetary chain told about) I heard a voice from the lens of the telescope saying: "This is the way. Follow me."

I looked through the lens and there I saw a long spiral of planets leading heavenwards. The spiral gradually arose, not making any indication of steps, but the close connection of the rise was like the winding around of the threads of a screw. Towards the top, the spiral began to get larger until it was beyond sight. Presently I heard the voice again: "This no doubt is a complicated affair to you."

"Yes."

"Focus your telescope and then look and see if it is any clearer."

I did so, and upon looking through the glass, I saw a large globe. It was cold and blank-looking. It seemed to be all rocks and upon close examination I found that it was mostly mineral rocks. That globe drifted away and left a small trail of light until another came in sight. On this globe, there was a green over-tone, luxuriant vegetation. Everywhere there were trees and vegetable growths of all kinds. This one gradually drifted away like the preceding. The third was covered with animals of every description—a mass, a chaos of animals. The fourth was similarly crowded with hairy men in battle, the next two showed the development of these men—gradual refinement and civilisation. The seventh I did not see.

I was staring into the dark abyss of the heavens, when I heard the voice again:

"I suppose you are still amazed."

"Yes."

"Well, then, listen to me and I'll try to explain it all. The great spiral of planets represents the way man progresses in the life eternal. Man's life on this earth is the life of a second, compared with the long evolution. In these six globes you saw when the telescope was focussed, is represented the evolution of man. The rocks were first. As they broke up and melted into earth, vegetable life formed, crawling things emerged from vegetable life and animals from them. Man grew and lifted out from the form of lower animals. The lower globes represented the development of man. In the long cycle of evolution, man continues in this way. After he finishes life on the seven globes, he starts over again on another seven, only the next group he lives on, his life keeps progressing. It is not the same life over again. Now you may look at the Seventh, the planet of Spirituality."

When I looked through the telescope again, I saw a beautiful globe. It was one great garden. In it there was a monastery of Nature. Overhead the trees had grown together and formed a roof. Far off to the north stretched a low range of hills, also to the east and west, but at the south was a small brook which ran along close to the altar of the monastery. It seemed to be happy in its course to the lake as it leaped over rocky shelves and formed small cascades while the sunbeams shone through the matted branches of the trees whose limbs stretched far out over the brook, and made it appear like a river of silver. I was admiring the scenery when I heard the voice again:

"You must go now, tell the people what you

saw, and some other night you will see the globe of spirituality more closely."

I awoke and found myself sitting in the big arm-chair of my room. "Can it be true, am I mistaken?" I pinched myself to see if I were awake; walked over to the window and looked out. There the world was just the same. I was so taken with the wonderful vision that at the hour of midnight I sit here and scratch these lines off. I have done as the great mystic voice commanded me, although it is roughly done. I hope to be able to tell you about the rest of the vision and more about the seventh globe some time again.

9

THE VALLEY-ROAD GIRL

THE Abbot had been with me about three months when he said:

"We were out to dinner yesterday to a house on the Valley Road, and the girl there is interested in your work. She asked many things about it. She's the noblest girl I know."

That last is a literal quotation. I remember it because it appealed to me at the time and set me to thinking.

"How old is she?"

"Seventeen."

"What is she interested in?"

"Writing, I think. She was the best around here in the essays."

"You might ask her to come."

I heard no more for a time. The Abbot does not rush at things. At the end of a week he remarked:

"She is coming."

It was two or three days after that before I saw them walking down the lane together. . . . She took a seat by the door—she takes it still, the same seat. It was an ordeal for her; also for The Abbot who felt in a sense responsible; also for me. . . . I could not begin all over again, in justice to him. We would have to continue his work and the little girl's and gradually draw the new one into an accelerating current. We called her The Valley-Road Girl. She suffered. It was very strange to her. She had been at school eleven years. I did not talk stars; in fact, I fell back upon the theme of all themes to me—a man's work, the meaning of it; what he gets and what the world gets out of it; intimating that this was not a place to learn how to reach the book and story markets. I said something the first day, which a few years ago I should have considered the ultimate heresy—that the pursuit of literature for itself, or for the so-called art of it, is a vain and tainted undertaking that cannot long hold a real man; that the real man has but one business: To awaken his potentialities, which are different from the potentialities of any other man; to express them in terms of matter the best he can, the straightest, simplest way he can. I said that there is joy and blessedness in doing this and in no other activity under the sun; that it is the key to all good; the door to a man's religion; that work and religion are the same at the top;

that the nearer one reaches the top, the more tremendous and gripping becomes the conception that they are one; finally that a man doing his own work for others, losing the sense of self in his work, is touching the very vitalities of religion and integrating the life that lasts.

I have said this before in this book—in other books. I may say it again. It is the truth to me —truth that the world is in need of. I am sorry for the man who has not his work. A man's work, such as I mean, is production. Handling the production of others in some cases is production. There are natural orderers and organisers, natural synthesisers, shippers, assemblers, and traffic masters. A truth is true in all its parts; there are workmen for all the tasks.

The Valley-Road Girl's work, in the first days, reminded me of my own early essay classes. Old friends were here again—Introduction, Discussion, Conclusion. Her things were rigid, mental. I could see where they would make very good in a school-room, such as I had known. Her work was spelled and periodic, phrased and paragraphed. The eyes of the teachers, that had been upon her these many years, had turned back for their ideas to authors who, if writing to-day, would be forced to change the entire order and impulse of their craft.

She was suffused with shyness. Even the little girl so far had not penetrated it. I was afraid

to open the throttle anywhere, lest she break and drop away. At the end of a week, The Abbot remained a moment after she was gone, and looked at me with understanding and sorrow.

"I'm afraid I made a mistake in asking her to come," he said.

Just then I was impelled to try harder, because he saw the difficulty. We had missed for days the joy from the session, that we had come to expect and delight in. Yet, because he expressed it, I saw the shortness and impatience of the point of view which had been mine, until he returned it to me.

"We won't give up," I said. "It didn't happen for nothing."

When he went away I felt better; also I saw that there was a personal impatience in my case that was not worthy of one who undertook to awaken the young. I introduced The Valley-Road Girl to Addison's "Sir Roger." There is an emptiness to me about Addison which I am not sure but partakes of a bit of prejudice, since I am primarily imbued with the principle that a writer must be a man before he is fit to be read. If I could read Addison now for the first time, I should know. The Valley Road Girl's discussion of Addison was scholarly in the youthful sense.

The day that she brought in this paper we got somehow talking about Fichte. The old German

is greatly loved and revered in this Study. He set us free a bit as we discussed him, and I gave to the newcomer a portion of one of his essays having to do with the "Excellence of the Universe." The next day I read her paper—and there was a beam in it.

I shut my eyes in gratitude that I had not allowed my stupidity to get away. I thanked The Abbot inwardly, too, for saying the words that set me clearer. The contrast between Addison and Fichte in life, in their work, in the talk they inspired here, and in The Valley-Road Girl's two papers—held the substance of the whole matter —stumbled upon as usual. We had a grand time that afternoon. I told them about Fichte losing his positions, writing to his countrymen—a wanderer, an awakened soul. And this brought us the hosts of great ones—the Burned Ones and their exaltations—George Fox and the Maid of Domremy—the everlasting spirit behind and above mortal affairs—the poor impotency of wood-fire to quench such immortality. Her eyes gleamed—and all our hearts burned.

"We do not want to do possible things," I said. "The big gun that is to deposit a missile twelve miles away does not aim at the mark, but at the skies. All things that are done—let them alone. The undone things challenge us. The spiritual plan of all the great actions and devotions which have not yet found substance—is already pre-

pared for the workmen of to-day to bring into matter—all great poems and inventions for the good of the world. They must gleam into being through our minds. The mind of some workman is being prepared for each. Our minds are darkened as yet; the sleeping giant awaits the day. He is not loathe to awake. Inertia is always of matter; never of spirit. He merely awaits the light. When the shutters of the mind are opened and the grey appears, he will arise and, looking forth, will discover his work.

"Nothing common awaits the youngest or the oldest. You are called to the great, *the impossible* tasks. But the mind must be entered by the Light—the heavy curtains of the self drawn apart. . . ."

That was the day I found the new, sweet influence in the room. It was not an accident that the boy had gone to dinner at her house. I saw that my task with The Valley-Road Girl was exactly opposite to the work with The Abbot—that he was dynamic within and required only the developed instrument for his utterances, and that she had been mentalised with obscuring educational matters and required a re-awakening of a naturally splendid and significant power; that I must seek to diffuse her real self through her expression. The time came that when she was absent, we all deeply missed her presence from the Study.

Months afterward, on a day that I did not give her a special task, she brought me the following which told the story in her own words of something she had met:

WHAT THE SCHOOLS DO FOR CHILDREN

Try to remember some of your early ideas and impressions. Can you recall the childish thoughts that came when a new thing made its first impress on your mind? If so, try to feel with me the things I am struggling to explain.

I like to look back at those times when everything to me was new; when every happening brought to me thoughts of my very own. Just now I recall the time I first noticed a tiny chick raise its head after drinking from a basin of water. To me that slow raising of the head after drinking seemed to indicate the chick's silent thanks to God. It meant that for each swallow it offered thanks. This was before I went to school.

There I learned the plain truth that the chick must raise its head to swallow. School had grasped the door-knob of my soul. The many children taught me the world's lesson that each man must look out for himself. If the simpler children did not keep up, that was their look-out. There was no time to stop and help the less fortunate. Push ahead! This is what I came to learn.

At school I met for the first time with distrust. At home I had always been trusted; my word never doubted. Once I was accused of copying;

that was the first wound. How I would have those all-powerful teachers make the child know he is trusted.

At school there were many other lessons for me to learn. One of the chief was competition. I learned it early. To have some of the class-stars shine brighter than I was intolerable. To shine as bright, was sufficient compensation for any amount of labour. The teachers encouraged competition. It lent life to labour; made the children more studious. Our motto was not to do our best, but to do as well as the best. Competition often grew so keen among my school friends that rivalry, jealousy and dislike entered our hearts. I am afraid we sometimes rejoiced at one another's misfortunes. Yet these competitors were my school friends. Out of school we were all fond of one another, but in school we grew further apart. My sister would compete with no one. I have often since wondered if that is why she, of all my school companions, has ever been my closest friend. The child filled with the competitive spirit from his entrance to his egress from school, enters the world a competitive man. It is hard for such a one to love his neighbour.

The one thing I consider of great benefit from school life is the taste of the world it gave me. For school is the miniature world. A man is said to benefit from a past evil.

The school did not teach me to express myself; it taught me how to echo the books I read. I did not look through my own eyes, but used the teacher's. I tried to keep from my work all trace of myself, reflecting only my instruction, knowing well that the teacher would praise his perfect re-

flection. Sometimes I feel that the door of my soul has so far shut that I can but get a glimpse of the real Me within.

Unless the school can trust children, show them that they should also be interested in their less fortunate school-mates, try to do always their best at the particular work to which they are best adapted, it must go on failing. A child had much better remain at home, a simple but whole-souled creature, learning what he can from Nature and wise books.

. . . I had talked to them long on making the most of their misfortunes. This also which came from The Valley-Road Girl, I thought very tender and wise:

MAY EVENING

A spirit of restlessness ruled me. Each night I retired with the hope that the morning would find it gone. It disturbed my sleep. It was not the constant discontent I had hitherto felt with the world. This was a new disquietude.

One May evening I followed our little river down to the place it flows into the Lake. Slowly the light of day faded. From my seat upon the green bank of a stream, a wonderful picture stretched before me. The small stream and the surrounding country were walled in by dense green trees. To the west the cool, dark depths parted only wide enough for the creek to disappear through a narrow portal. Through small openings in the southern wall, I caught glimpses of

the summer cottages on the sandy shore. To the north stretched the pasture-lands with shade-trees happy to hide their nakedness with thick foliage. Here, too, a large elm displayed all its grace. To the east was a bridge and a long lane. From behind a misty outline of trees, the sun's crimson reflections suffused the western sky. Two men paddled a boat out into the light and disappeared under the bridge. Nothing disturbed the peace of the stream save the dip of the paddles, and the fish rising to the surface for food. A circle on the surface meant that an insect had lain at its centre; a fish had risen and devoured it. Circles of this kind were continually being cut by the circumferences of other circles. . . . A dark speck moved down the stream. A turtle was voyaging.

Now, far in the shadows, I saw a man sitting on the bank fishing. His patience and persistence were remarkable, for he had been there all the time. But the fish were at play. The occasional splash of the carp, mingling with the perpetual song of the birds and the distant roar of the waves breaking on the shore to the south, formed one grand over-tone.

A feeling of awe came over me. I felt my insignificance. I saw the hand of God. My relation to my surroundings was very clear. My soul bowed to the God-ness in all things natural. The God-ness in me was calling to be released. It was useless to struggle against it, and deafen my ears to the cry. It must be given voice. I felt my soul condemning me as an echoer and imitator of men, as one whose every thought becomes coloured with others' views. Like a sponge I was readily receptive. Let a little mental pressure be

applied and I gave back the identical thoughts hardly shaded by inward feelings. This was my soul's complaint.

No tree was exactly like one of its neighbours. Each fulfilled its purpose in its particular way. Yet all proclaimed the One Source. Performing its function, it was fit to censure me and I took the cup.

. . . The sun had set. Darkness was wrapping the basin of the little stream; heavy dew was falling. Mother Nature was weeping tears of sympathy for one so short-sighted and drawn to failure.

10

COMPASSION

I WAS struck early in the progress of the class of three with the difference between the little girl, now turned eleven, and the other two of fourteen and seventeen, in the one particular of daring to be herself. She has never been patronised; and in the last year or more has been actively encouraged to express the lovely and the elusive. Also, as stated, she has no particular talent for writing. She is the one who wants to be a mother. Not in the least precocious, her charm is quite equal for little girls or her elders. Her favourite companions until recently were those of her own age.

On the contrary, the other two were called to the work here because they want to write, and although this very tendency should keep open the passages between the zone of dreams and the more temperate zones of matter, the fashions and mannerisms of the hour, artfulness of speech and reading, the countless little reserves and covers

for neglected thinking, the endless misunderstandings of life and the realities of existence—had already begun to clog the ways which, to every old artist, are the very passages of power.

". . . Except that ye become as little children——" that is the beginning of significant workmanship, as it is the essential of faith in religion. The great workmen have all put away the illusions of the world, or most of them, and all have told the same story—look to Rodin, Puvis de Chavannes, Balzac, Tolstoi, only to mention a little group of the nearer names. In their mid-years they served men, as they fancied men wanted to be served; and then they met the lie of this exterior purpose, confronted the lie with the realities of their own nature, and fought the fight for the cosmic simplicity which is so often the unconscious flowering of the child-mind. All of them wrenched open, as they could, the doors of the prison-house, and became more and more like little children at the end.

The quality I mean is difficult to express in straight terms. One must have the settings to see and delight in them. But it is also the quality of the modern verse. The new generation has it as no other generation, because the old shames and conventions are losing their weight in our hearts. . . . I was promising an untold something for a future lesson to the little girl yesterday, just as

she was getting to work. The anticipation disturbed the present moment, and she said:

"Don't have secrets. When there are secrets, I always want to peek——"

Yesterday, a little later, we both looked up from work at the notes of a song-sparrow in the nearest elm. The song was more elaborate for the perfect morning. It was so joyous that it choked me—in the sunlight and elm-leaves. It stood out from all the songs of the morning because it was so near—every note so finished and perfect, and we were each in the pleasantness of our tasks. The little girl leaned over to the window. I was already watching. We heard the answer from the distance. The song was repeated, and again. In the hushes, we sipped the ecstasy from the Old Mother—that the sparrow knew and expressed. Like a flicker, he was gone—a leaning forward on the branch and then a blur, . . . presently this sentence in the room:

". . . *sang four songs and flew away.*"

It was a word-portrait. It told me so much that I wanted; the number of course was not mental, but an obvious part of the inner impression. However, no after explanations will help—if the art of the thing is not apparent. I told it later in the day to another class, and a woman said—"Why, those six words make a Japanese poem."

And yesterday again, as we walked over to din-

ner, she said: "I see a Chinese city. It is dim and low and smoky. It is night and the lights are at half-mast."

She had been making a picture of her own of China. It throws the child in on herself to imagine thus. She has never been to China, and her reading on the subject was not recent. I always say to them: "It is all within. If you can listen deeply enough and see far enough, you can get it all. When a man wishes to write about a country, he is hindered as much as helped if he knows much about it. He feels called upon to express that which he has seen—which is so small compared to the big colour and atmosphere."

I had been to China but would have required a page to make such a picture.

A little while before she had been to Holland in fancy. She had told a story of a child there and "the little house in which she lived looked as if it had been made of old paving-blocks ripped up from the street."

Often she falls back upon the actual physical environment *to get started*, as this recent introduction: "To-day I am sitting on the end of a breakwater, listening to the peaceful noise the Lake makes as it slaps up against the heavy old rocks. The sun is pouring down hot rays upon my arms, bare feet and legs, turning them from winter's faded white——"

Or:

"Once I had my back up against an old Beech tree on a carpet of spring beauties and violet plants. Spiders, crickets and all sorts of little woodland bugs went crawling on me and around, but instead of shuddering at their little legs, I felt a part——"

I said to her about the China picture: "Put it down, and be careful to write it just as you see it, not trying to say what you have heard,—at least, until after your first picture is made." . . . I had a conviction that something prompted that "half-mast" matter, and that if we could get just at that process in the child's mind, we should have something very valuable for all concerned. But we can only approximate the inner pictures. The quality of impressionism in artistry endeavours to do that—to hurl the fleeting things into some kind of lasting expression. The greatest expressionist can only approximate, even after he has emerged from the prison-house and perfected his instrument through a life of struggle. His highest moments of production are those of his deepest inner listening—in which the trained mind-instrument is quiescent and receptive, its will entirely given over to the greater source within.

The forenoons with the little girl before the others came, showed me, among many things, that education should be mainly a happy process. If I find her getting too dreamy with the things she loves (that her expression is becoming "wum-

bled," as Algernon Blackwood says), I administer a bit of stiff reading for the pure purpose of straightening out the brain. The best and dryest of the human solids is John Stuart Mill. Weights, measures and intellectual balances are all honest in his work—honest to madness. He is the perfect antidote for dreams. Burke's ancient essay "On the Sublime" is hard reading, but has its rewards. You will laugh at a child of ten or eleven reading these things. I once kept the little girl for three days on the latter, and when I opened the doors of her refrigerating plant, and gave her Thoreau's "Walking"—there was something memorable in the liberation. She took to Thoreau, as one held in after a week of storm emerges into full summer. The release from any struggle leaves the mind with a new receptivity. It was not that I wanted her to *get* Mill or Burke, but that the mental exercise which comes from grappling with these slaves of logic, or masters, as you like, is a development of tissue, upon which the dreams, playing forth again from within, find a fresh strength for expression.

Dreaming without action is a deadly dissipation. The mind of a child becomes fogged and ineffective when the dreams are not brought forth. Again, the dreams may be the brooding of a divine one, and yet if the mind does not furnish the power for transmuting them into matter, they are without value, and remain hid treasures.

It is the same as faith without works. While I hold the conviction that the brain itself is best developed by the egress of the individual, rather than by any processes from without, yet I would not keep the exterior senses closed.

In fact, just here is an important point of this whole study. In the case of The Abbot it was the intellect which required development, even to begin upon the expression of that within which was mainly inarticulate, but mightily impressive, at least, to me. The Valley-Road Girl's mind was trained. She had obeyed scrupulously. In her case, the first business was to re-awaken her within, and her own words have related something of the process.

The point is this: If I have seemed at any time to make light of intellectual development, subserving it to intuitional expression, it is only because nineteen-twentieths of the effort of current educational systems is toward mental training to the neglect of those individual potencies which are the first value of each life, and the expression of which is the first purpose of life itself. My zeal for expression from within-outward amounts to an enthusiasm, and is stated rushingly as an heroic measure is brought, only because it is so pitifully overlooked in the present scheme of things.

Latin, mathematics, the great fact-world, above all that endlessly various plane of fruition which Nature and her infinite processes amount to, are

all splendid tissue-builders; and of this tissue is formed the calibre of the individual by which his service is made effective to the world. As I have already written, one cannot shoot a forty-five consciousness through a twenty-two brain. The stirring concept cannot get through to the world except through the brain.

In the last sentence I see a difficulty for the many who still believe that the brain contains the full consciousness. Holding that, most of the views stated here fall away into nothing. Perhaps one is naïve, not to have explained before, that from the view these things are written the brain is but a temporary instrument of expression —most superb and admirable at its best, but death is at work upon it; at its best, a listener, an interpreter, without creativeness; an instrument, like the machine which my fingers touch, but played upon not only from without but within.

If you look at the men who have become great in solitude, in prison, having been forced to turn their eyes within—you will find a hint to the possibilities. Yet they are rare compared to the many upon whom solitude has been thrust as the most terrible punitive process. By the time most men reach mid-life they are entirely dependent upon exterior promptings for their mental activity—the passage entirely closed between their intrinsic *con*tent and the brain that interprets. Solitary

confinement makes madmen of such—if the door cannot be wrenched ajar.

The human brain is like a sieve, every brain differently meshed. If the current flows continually in one direction either from within-outward, or from the world-inward, the meshes become clogged, and can be cleansed only, as a sieve is flushed, by reversing the current. The ideal is to be powerful mentally and spiritually, of course. "I would have you powerful in two worlds," a modern Persian mystic said to one of his disciples. . . . Still I would not hold the two methods of development of equal importance. The world is crowded with strongly developed intellects that are without enduring significance, because they are not ignited by that inner individual force which would make them inimitable.

A man must achieve that individuality which is not a threescore-ten proposition, and must begin to express it in his work before he can take his place in the big cosmic orchestra. In fact, he must achieve his own individuality before he has a decent instrument to play upon, or any sense of interpretation of the splendid scores of life. In fact again, a man must achieve his own individuality before he can realise that the sense of his separateness which he has laboured under so long is a sham and a delusion.

Until a man has entered with passion upon the great conception of the Unity of all Existing

Things (which is literally brooding upon this planet in these harrowing but high days of history), he is still out of the law, and the greater his intellect, the more destructive his energy. Time has made the greatest of the *sheer* intellects of the past appear apish and inane; and has brought closer and closer to us with each racial crisis (sometimes the clearer according to their centuries of remoteness) those spiritual intelligences who were first to bring us the conception of the Oneness of All Life, and the immortal fire, Compassion, which is to be the art of the future.

Finally, a man must achieve his own individuality before he has anything fit to give the world. He achieves this by the awakening of the giant within, whom many have reason to believe is immortal. Inevitably this awakening is an illumination of the life itself; and in the very dawn of this greater day, in the first touch of that white fire of Compassion, the Unity of All Things is descried.

11

THE LITTLE GIRL'S WORK

"WE will do a book of travels," I said to the little girl. "You have done Holland; you are on China. After you have made your picture of China, I'll tell you what I saw there in part, and give you a book to read."

So often her own progress has given me a cue like this for the future work. I put The Abbot on this travel-work for a few days, starting him with Peru. He found a monastery there. In India he found monasteries, even in the northern woods of Ontario. He would shut his eyes; the setting would form, and after his period of imaginative wandering, the monastery would be the reward. I will not attempt to suggest the psychology of this, but to many there may be a link in it. In any event, the imagination is developed, and its products expressed.

The little girl was asked to write an essay on a morning she had spent along the Shore. She

sat in the Study with a pencil and paper on her lap—and long afterward, perhaps ten minutes, exclaimed:

"Why, I began at the beginning and told the whole story to myself, and now I've got to begin all over and write it, and it won't be half so good."

"Yes, that's the hard part, to put it down," I said. "Write and write until you begin to dream as you write—until you forget hand and paper and place, and instead of dreaming simply make the hand and brain interpret the dream as it comes. That is the perfect way."

In these small things which I am printing of the little girl's, you will get a glimpse of her reading and her rambles. Perhaps you will get an idea, more clearly than I can tell it, of the nature of the philosophy back of the work here, but there can be no good in hiding that. All who come express themselves somehow each day. I have merely plucked these papers from the nearest of scores of her offerings. There seems to be a ray in everything she does, at least one in a paper. What is more cheerfully disclosed than anything else, from my viewpoint, is the quickening imagination. Apparently she did not title this one:

Nature is most at home where man has not yet started to build his civilisation. Of course,

she is everywhere—in Germany, in Canada and California, but the Father is more to be seen with her in the wild places.

In the beginning everything belonged to Nature. She is the Mother. Flowers, then, could grow where and when they wanted to, without being placed in all kinds of star and round and square shapes. Some of their leaves could be longer than others if Nature liked, without being cut. The great trees, such as beeches, elms, oaks and cedars, could coil and curve their branches without the thought of being cut down for a sidewalk, or trimmed until they were frivolous nothings. Small stones and shells could lie down on a bed of moss at the feet of these trees and ask questions that *disgraced* Mr. Beech. (But of course they were young.) The flower fairies could sit in the sunlight and laugh at the simple little stones.

Oh! dear, I just read this through and it's silly. It sounds like some kind of a myth, written in the Fifteenth Century instead of the Twentieth, but I am not going to tear it up. The thing I *really* wanted to write about this morning was the goodness of being alive here in winter.

After a long, lovely sleep at night, in a room with wide-open windows and plenty of covers, you wake up fresh and happy. From the East comes up over the frozen Lake, the sun sending streaks of orange, red, yellow, all through the sky.

Here and there are little clouds of soft greys and pinks, which look like the fluffy heads of young lettuce.

Venus in the south, big and wonderful, fades

out of sight when the last shades of night pass out of the sky.

Dress, every minute the sky growing more brilliant, until you cannot look at it. A breakfast of toast and jam—just enough to make you feel like work.

A short walk to the Study with the sweet smell of wood-smoke sharpening the air. Then in the Study, reading essays by great men, especially of our favourite four Americans, Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman, and Lincoln. A wonderful Nature essay from Thoreau!

So many things of Nature are spoiled to make more money for men; so many lambs and horses and birds are killed to make coats and hats. Horses are killed and sold as beef, and the animals are slaughtered in such hideous and vulgar ways—maddened with fear in butchers' pens before the end. Wise people know that fears are poison. Day by day and year by year these poisons are being worked into our bodies until we get used to them and then we find it hard to stop eating meat. A person in this condition is never able to associate with the mysteries of earth, such as fairies and nymphs of flowers, water and fire, nor with the real truths of higher Nature, which men should know.

In among the rocks and mountains I can imagine cross, ugly little gnomes going about their work—I mean their *own* work and affairs. To me it seems that gnomes are not willing to associate with people; they haven't got the time to bother with us. They go grumbling about, muttering:

"Somebody sat on my rock; somebody sat on my rock."

I would like to see them and find out what they are so busy about; see the patterns of their leathery little clothes; their high hats, leathery capes and aprons. Some time I will see them. I am not familiar with all this, but I imagine very thick leather belts and buckles. Their feet are small, but too big *for them,* and make a little clatter as they go over the rocks. Their hands I cannot see; they must be under the cape or somewhere that I do not know of.

The Spring, I think, is the best time for the little green woodsmen. The trees are beginning to get pale-green buds, and the ground is all damp from being frozen so long. The woodsmen sing a great deal then and laugh and talk. They come to the edge of the river when a boat comes in, but if one moves quickly they all run away.

I think there must have been many happy little fairies and cross old gnomes in the northern woods where I stayed a week last summer. There were so many great rocks, so many trees and all. Many mysteries must have floated around me wanting me to play with them, but I wasn't ready. Fairies were only a dream to me then. But some time I must have been a friend of the fairies, for it seems to me that I have seen them, and spent a good deal of time with them, because the memories are still with me. I will spend most of my spare time with them next summer and learn much more about them.

. . . She could get no further on the Chinese picture, except that the low street lamps were

shaped like question-marks. I told her there was something in that street if she could find it, suggesting that she might think hard about it the last thing at night before she went to sleep, but I have heard nothing further. On occasions I have been stopped short. For instance, yesterday the little girl began to tell me something with great care, and I was away until she was in the middle of the story, and the intimate gripping thing about it aroused me. I told her to write the thing down just as she had told it, with this result:

". . . Every little while, when I am not thinking of any one thing, there is a voice inside. It seems to be telling me something, but I never know what it says. I never wanted or tried to know until a month ago, but it stops before I can get the sense of it. It is three things, I am sure, because after the voice stops these three things run through my mind, just as quick as the voice came and went away: A thought which is full of mystery; another one that is terrible; and the third which is strange but very funny. The third seems to be connected with Mother in some way; something she said many, many years ago. . . . I asked Mother to talk that way, and she talked like old country women, but it was not the voice I asked for."

I have read this many times, unable to interpret. One of the loveliest things about the child-mind is its expectancy for answers, for fulfilments at once.

"I do not know what it means," I said. "If some answer came, I could not be sure that it was the perfect one, but I am thinking about it every day, and perhaps something will come."

These are serious things. . . . Here is one of her more recent products on Roses:

If one wants to have perfect beauty and the odour of the Old Mother herself in his yard, he will plant roses. I cannot express in words what roses bring to me when I look down at them or sniff their magnificently shaded petals. They seem to pull me right out of the body and out into another world where everything is beautiful, and where people do not choose the red ramblers for their garden favourites, but the real tea roses.

I took three roses into a house—a red one, a white one, very much finer than the first, and the third a dream-rose that takes me into the other world—the kind of yellow rose that sits in a jet bowl leaning on the cross in the Chapel room every day.

A girl that was in that house looked at the roses.

"Oh," she shouted, after a moment, "what a grand red one that is!"

"Which one do you like best?" I asked.

"The red one, of course," the girl answered.

"Why, the other two are much——" I began.

"No, they ain't," said the girl. "Don't you know every one likes them red ones best?"

I walked away. I believe that city people who never see Nature, know her better from their reading than country people who are closer to her

brown body (than those who walk on pavements) but never look any higher. And I think country people like red roses because they are like them. The red roses do not know they are not so beautiful as the yellow teas; they bloom just as long and often, and often grow bigger. They are not ashamed.

A mystery to me: A tiny piece of exquisite foliage is put into the ground. After a while its leaves all fall off and it is bare and brown, like a little stick in the snow. Yet down under the snow at the roots of the brown stick, fairy rose spirits are being worked up into the small stalks. They have been waiting for a rose to be put into the ground that is fine enough for them, and it has come—and others. Months afterward, a dozen or more of pinkish yellow-golden roses come out, loosening as many fairy spirits again. Isn't it all wonderful?

I enjoyed the first reading of this which the little girl called A Grey Day:

Small, cold, happy waves constantly rolling up on the tan shore. The air is crisp and cool, but there is very little wind. Everything is looking fresh and green. The train on the crossing makes enough noise for six, with a screeching of wheels and puffing of steam. The tug and dredge on the harbour are doing their share, too. All is a happy workday scene. I started in this morning to finish an essay I had begun the day before. After a little while, I opened the window, and the happy working sounds came into the room. I

could not finish that essay; I had to write something about the grey happy day.

On a grey day I delight in studying the sky, for it is always so brimming full of pictures. Pictures of every kind. It was on a grey day like this in the early Spring that "Cliff" made us see the great snow giants on the other side of the water, cleaning away all the snow and ice with great shovels and pick-axes. It was on a grey day that a Beech tree made me see that all the rocks, bugs, flowers, trees, and people are only one. These grey days that people find so much fault with, if they are not so important as the days when the sun cooks you, they are far more wonderful! One's imagination can wander through the whole universe on grey days. The pictures in the sky give one hints of other worlds, for there are so many different faces, different and strange lands and people. Far-off houses, kingdoms, castles, birds, beasts and everything else. Such wonderful things. Sometimes I see huge dragons, and then the cloud passes and the dragons go away. The sky is always changing. The pictures never last, but new ones come.

A TALK

What wonderful things come of little talks. I mean the right kind. Whole lives changed, perhaps by a half-hour's talk, or the same amount of time spent in reading. Man comes to a point in life, the half-way house, I have heard it called, when he either takes the right path which leads to the work that was made for him or he goes the wrong. Oftentimes a short talk from one who

knows will set a man on the right track. One man goes the wrong way through many a danger and pain and suffering, and finally wakes up to the right, goes back, tells the others, and saves many from going the wrong way and passing through the same pain and suffering.

At breakfast this morning we were talking about the universe from the angels around the throne to the little brown gnomes that work so hard, flower fairies, and wood and water nymphs and nixies. Such a strange, wild, delightful feeling comes over me when I hear about the little brown and green gnomes or think of them. One who does not know the fairies well would think they were all brothers, but it doesn't seem so to me. When I think of the green gnomes, a picture always comes of a whole lot of beautiful springy-looking bushes. I can always see the green gnomes through the bushes. They pay no attention to me, but just go right on laughing and talking by themselves. But when I think of brown gnomes a very different picture comes. It is Fall then, and leaves are on the ground and brown men are working so hard and so fast their hands and feet are just a blurr. They give you a smile if you truly love them. But that is all, for they are working hard.

If one were well and could master his body in every way, he would be able to see plainly the white lines which connect everything together, and the crowns that are on the heads of the ones who deserve them. And one could see the history of a stone, a tree, or any *old* thing.

What wonderful stories there would be in an old Beech tree that has stood in the same place

for more than a hundred years, and has seen all the wonders that came that way. Their upper branches are always looking up, and so at night they would see all the Sleep-bodies that pass that woods. The beech trees would make the old witches feel so good and happy by fanning them with their leaves and shading them that the witches would undo all the evil spells they had cast on people, and so many other wonderful stories would there be in a Beech tree's history.

12

TEARING-DOWN SENTIMENT

IT was mid-fall. Now, with the tiling, planting, stone study and stable, the installation of water and trees and payments on the land, I concluded that I might begin on that winter and summer dream of a house—in about Nineteen Hundred and Twenty-three. . . . But I had been seeing it too clearly. So clear a thought literally draws the particles of matter together. A stranger happened along and said:

"When I get tired and discouraged again, I'm coming out here and take another look at your little stone study."

I asked him in. He was eager to know who designed the shop. I told him that the different city attics I had worked in were responsible. He found this interesting. Finally I told him about the dream that I hoped some time to come true out yonder among the baby elms—the old father fireplace and all its young relations, the broad porches and the nine stone piers, the bedrooms

strung on a balcony under a roof of glass, the brick-paved *patio* below and the fountain in the centre. . . . As he was a very good listener, I took another breath and finished the picture—to the sleeping porch that would overhang the bluff, casement-windows, red tiles that would dip down over the stonework, even to the bins for potatoes and apples in the basement.

"That's very good," he said. "I'm an architect of Chicago. I believe I can frame it up for you."

When a thing happens like that, I invariably draw the suspicion that it was intended to be so. Anyway, I had to have plans. . . . When they came from Chicago, I shoved the date of building ahead to Nineteen-Thirty, and turned with a sigh to the typewriter. . . . Several days afterward there was a tap at the study door in the drowsiest part of the afternoon. A contractor and his friend, the lumberman, were interested to know if I contemplated building. Very positively I said not—so positively that the subject was changed. The next day I met the contractor, who said he was sorry to hear of my decision, since the lumberman had come with the idea of financing the stone house, but was a bit delicate about it, the way I spoke.

This was information of the most obtruding sort. . . . One of my well-trusted friends once

said to me, looking up from a work-bench in his own cellar:

"When I started to build I went in debt just as far as they would let me."

He had one of the prettiest places I ever saw—of a poor man's kind, and spent all the best hours of his life making it lovelier.

"And it's all paid for?" I asked.

He smiled. "No—not by a good deal less than half."

"But suppose something should happen that you couldn't finish paying for it?"

"Well, then I've had a mighty good time doing it for the other fellow."

That was not to be forgotten.

So I went down the shore with the lumberman, and we sat on the sand under a pine tree. . . . On the way home I arranged for excavation and the foundation masonry. . . . I'm not going to tell you how to build a house, because I don't know. I doubt if ever a house was built with a completer sense of detachment on the part of the nominal owner—at times. . . . When they consulted me, I referred to the dream which the architect had pinned to matter in the form of many blue-prints—for a time.

As the next Spring and the actual building advanced, chaos came down upon me like the slow effects of a maddening drug. For two years I had ridden through the little town once or twice

a day for mail; and had learned the pleasure of nodding to the villagers—bankers, doctors, merchants, artisans, labourers and children. I had seldom entered stores or houses and as gently as possible refrained from touching the social system of the place. Our lives were very full on the Shore.

There was a real pleasure to me in the village. Many great ones have fallen before the illusion of it. . . . There is a real pleasure to me in the village still, but different.

Long ago, I went up into the north country and lived a while near a small Indian party on the shore of a pine-shadowed river. I watched their life a little. They knew fires and enjoyed tobacco. They feasted upon the hard, gamey bass, and sent members of their party to the fields for grains. Their children lived in the sun—a strange kind of enchantment over it all. I stood high on a rock above the river one evening across from the Indian camp, with a Canadian official who was a kind of white father to the remnant of the Indian tribes in that part of the province. We talked together, and as we talked the sun went down. An old Indian arose on the bank opposite. In the stillness we heard him tap out the ashes of his pipe upon a stone. Then he came down like a dusky patriarch to the edge of the stream, stepped into his canoe and lifted the paddle.

There was no sound from that, and the stream

was in the hush of evening and summer. He had seen us and was coming across to pay his respects to my companion. When he was half-way across, a dog detached himself from the outer circle of the fire and began to swim after the canoe. We saw the current swing him forward, and the little beast's adjustment to it. The canoe had come straight. It was now in the still water beneath, and the dog in the centre of the stream—the point of a rippling wedge.

The Indian drew up his craft, and started to climb to us. The dog made the bank, shook himself and followed upward, but not with a scamper like a white man's dog, rather a silent keeping of distance. Just below us the Indian halted, turned, picked up with both hands a rock the size of a winter turnip and heaved it straight down at the beast's head. No word.

The dog lurched sideways on the trail, so that the missile merely grazed him. We heard a subdued protest of one syllable, as he turned and went back. It was *all* uninteresting night to me now—beauty, picturesqueness, enchantment gone, with that repressed yelp. I didn't even rise from my seat on the rock. I had looked too close. That night the Canadian said:

"The Indian race is passing out. They do not resist. I go from camp to camp in the Spring, and ask about the missing friends—young and old, even the young married people. They point—

back and upward—as if one pointed over his shoulder toward a hill just descended. . . . It's tuberculosis mainly. You see them here living a life designed to bring anything but a corpse back to health. When the winter comes they go to the houses, batten the windows, heap up the fires, and sit beside them, sleep and have their food beside them, twenty in a room. Before Spring, the touched ones cough, and are carried out. They seem to know that the race is passing. They do not resist—they do not care to live differently."

Had it not been for that hurled rock which broke open the old Indian's nature for me, I should have preserved a fine picture perhaps, but it would not have been grounded upon wisdom, and therefore would have amounted to a mere sentiment. It was the same with the country town, when the house-building forced me to look closely at the separate groups of workmen that detached themselves from the whole, and came to build the house. I think I can bring the meaning even clearer through another incident:

. . . One of the young men here loved the sunlight on his shoulders so well—had such a natural love for the feel of light and air upon his bare flesh—that he almost attained that high charm of forgetting how well he looked. . . . The country people occasionally come down to the water on the Sabbath (from their homes back on the automobile routes and the interurban lines), and for

what they do not get of the natural beauty of shore and bluff, I have a fine respect. However, they didn't miss the Temporary Mr. Pan.

They complained that he was exposing himself, even that he was shameless.

Now I am no worshipper of nudity. I'd like to be, but it disappoints in most cases. There is always a strain about an object that is conscious of itself—and that nudity which is unconscious of itself is either shameless, an inevitable point of its imperfection anatomically for the trained eye; or else it is touched with divinity and does not frequent these shores.

The human body has suffered the fate of all flesh and plant-fibre that is denied light. A certain vision must direct all growth—and vision requires light. The covered things are white-lidded and abortive, scrawny from struggle or bulbous from the feeding dream into which they are prone to sink.

It will require centuries for the human race to outgrow the shames which have come to adhere to our character-structure from recent generations. We have brutalised our bodies with these thoughts. We associate women with veils and secrecy, but the trouble is not with them, and has not come from women, but from the male-ordering of women's affairs to satisfy his own ideas of possession and conservation. The whole cycle of human reproduction is a man-arrangement accord-

ing to present standards, and every process is destructively bungled. However, that's a life-work, that subject.

In colour, texture and contour, the thoughts of our ancestors have debased our bodies, organically and as they are seen. Nudity is not beautiful, and does not play sweetly upon our minds because of this heritage. The human body is associated with darkness, and the place of this association in our minds is of corresponding darkness.

The young man and I talked it over. We decided that it would be a thankless task for him to spend the summers in ardent endeavour to educate the countryside by browning his back in public. *That* did not appeal to us as a fitting life-task; moreover, his project would frequently be interrupted by the town marshal. As a matter of truth, one may draw most of the values of the actinic rays of the sun through thin white clothing; and if one has not crushed his feet into a revolting mass in pursuit of the tradesmen, he may go barefooted a little while each day on his own grass-plot without shocking the natives or losing his credit at the bank. The real reason for opening this subject is to express (and be very sure to express without hatred) certain facts in the case of the countryside which complained.

They are villagers and farm-people who live with Mother Nature without knowing her. They look into the body of Nature, but never see her

face to face. The play of light and the drive of intelligence in her eyes is above the level of their gaze, or too bright. Potentially they have all the living lights—the flame immortal, but it is turned low. It does not glorify them, as men or parents or workmen. It does not inspire them to Questing—man's real and most significant business. They do not know that which is good or evil in food, in music, colour, fabric, books, in houses, lands or faith. They live in a low, lazy rhythm and attract unto themselves inevitably objects of corresponding vibration. One observes this in their children, in their schools and most pathetically in their churches. They abide dimly in the midst of their imperfections, but with tragic peace. When their children revolt, they meet on every hand the hideous weight of matter, the pressure of low established forces, and only the more splendid of these young people have the integrity of spirit to rise above the resistance.

As for the clothing that is worn, they would do better if left suddenly naked as a people, and without preconceptions, were commanded to find some covering for themselves. As herds, they have fallen into a descending arc of usage, under the inevitable down-pull of trade. Where the vibrations of matter are low, its responsive movement is gregarian rather than individual. The year around, these people wear clothing,—woollen pants and skirts, which if touched with an iron,

touched with sunlight, rain or any medium that arouses the slumbering quantities, the adjacent nostril is offended.

They are heavy eaters of meat the year round. They slay their pets with as little concern as they gather strawberries. Their ideas of virtue and legitimacy have to do with an ecclesiastical form, as ancient as Nineveh and as effaced in meaning. They accept their children, as one pays a price for pleasure; and those children which come from their stolen pleasures are either murdered or marked with shame. Their idea of love is made indefinite by desire, and their love of children has to do with the sense of possession.

They are not significant men in their own fields; rarely a good mason, a good carpenter, a good farmer. The many have not even found the secret of order and unfolding from the simplest task. The primary meaning of the day's work in its relation to life and blessedness is not to be conceived by them. They are taught from childhood that first of all work is for bread; that bread perishes; therefore one must pile up as he may the where-with to purchase the passing bread; that bread is bread and the rest a gamble. . . . They answer to the slow loop waves which enfold the many in amusement and opinion, in suspicion and cruelty and half-truth. To all above, they are as if they were not; mediocre men, static in spiritual affairs, a little pilot-burner of vision

flickering from childhood, but never igniting their true being, nor opening to them the one true way which each man must go alone, before he begins to be erect in other than bone and sinew.

They cover their bodies—but they do not cover their faces nor their minds nor their souls. And this is the marvel, *they are not ashamed!* They reveal the emptiness of their faces and the darkness of their minds without complaining to each other or to the police. From any standpoint of reality, the points of view of the many need only to be expressed to reveal their abandonment. . . . But this applies to crowds anywhere, to the world-crowd, whose gods to-day are trade and patriotism and motion-photography.

The point is, we cannot look back into the centres of the many for our ideals. There is no variation to the law that all beauty and progress is ahead. Moreover, a man riding through a village encounters but the mask of its people. We have much practice through life in bowing to each other. There is a psychology about greetings among human kind that is deep as the pit. When the thing known as Ignorance is established in a community, one is foolish to rush to the conclusion that the trouble is merely an unlettered thing.

No one has idealised the uneducated mind with more ardour than the one who is expressing these studies of life. But I have found that the mind that has no quest, that does not begin its search

among the world's treasures from a child, is a mind that is just as apt to be aggressive in its small conceptions as the most capacious and sumptuously furnished, and more rigorous in its treatment of dependents. I have found that the untrained mind is untrained in the qualities of appreciation, is not cleanly, nor workmanlike, nor spiritual, nor generous, nor tolerant; that the very fundamentals of its integrity will hurt you; that it talks much and is not ashamed.

All literature has overdone the dog-like fidelity of simple minds. The essence of loyalty of man to man is made of love-capacity and understanding—and these are qualities that come from evolution of the soul just as every other fine thing comes.

We perceive the old farmer on his door-step in the evening—love and life-lines of labour upon him; we enjoy his haleness and laughter. . . . But that is the mask. His mind and its every attribute of consciousness is designed to smother an awakened soul. You have to bring God to him in his own terminology, or he will fight you, and believe in his heart that he is serving his God. His generation is moving slowly now, yet if his sons and daughters quicken their pace, he is filled with torments of fear or curses them for straying.

I would not seem ill-tempered. I have long since healed from the chaos and revelations of building. It brought me a not too swift review

of life as I had met it afield and in the cities for many years. The fact that one little contract for certain interior installations was strung over five months, and surprised me with the possibilities of inefficiency and untruth, is long since forgotten. The water runs. Ten days after peace was established here, all my wounds were healing by first intention; and when I saw the carpenters at work on a new contract the day after they left me, the pity that surged through my breast was strangely poignant, and it was for them. The conduct of their days was a drive through the heaviest and most stubborn of materials, an arriving at something like order against the grittiest odds, and they must do it again and again. There is none to whom I cannot bow in the evening—but the idealisation of the village lives is changed and there is knowledge.

I had been getting too comfortable. One cannot do his service in the world and forget its fundamentals. We have to love before we can serve, but it is fatuous to love blindly. The things that we want are ahead. The paths behind do not contain them; the simplicity of peasants and lowly communities is not merely unlettered. One does not need to deal with one small town; it is everywhere. The ways of the crowds are small ways. We wrong ourselves and bring imperfection to our tasks when we forget that. We love the Indian crossing the stream in the great and

gracious night—but God pity the Indian's dog. We must look close at life, and not lie to ourselves, because our ways are cushioning a little.

All idealism that turns back must suffer the fate of mere sentiments. We must know the stuff the crowds are made of, if we have a hand in bringing in the order and beauty. You have heard men exclaim:

"How noble are the simple-minded—how sweet the people of the Countryside—how inevitable and unerring is the voice of the people!" As a matter of truth, unless directed by some strong man's vision, the voice of the people has never yet given utterance to constructive truth; and the same may be said of those who cater to the public taste in politics or the so-called arts. The man who undertakes to give the people what the people want is not an artist or a true leader of any dimension. He is a tradesman and finds his place in his generation.

The rising workman in any art or craft learns by suffering that all good is ahead and not elsewhere; that he must dare to be himself even if forced to go hungry for that honour; that he must not lose his love for men, though he must lose his illusions. Sooner or later, when he is ready, one brilliant little fact rises in his consciousness—one that comes to stay, and around which all future thinking must build itself. It is this:

When one lifts the mask from any crowd, com-

monness is disclosed in every change and movement of personality. At the same time, the crowds of common people are the soil of the future, a splendid mass potentially, the womb of every heroism and masterpiece to be.

All great things must come from the people, because great leaders of the people turn their passionate impregnation of idealism upon them. First the dreamer dreams—and then the people make it action. . . .

What we see that hurts us so as workmen is but the unfinished picture, the back of the tapestry.

To be worth his spiritual salt, the artist, any artist, must turn every force of his conceiving into that great restless Abstraction, the many; he must plunge whole-heartedly in the doing, but cut himself loose from the thing done; at least, he must realise that what he is willing to give could not be bought. . . . When he is quite ready, there shall arise for him, out of the Abstraction, something finished; something as absolutely his own as the other half of his circle.

The one relentless and continual realisation which drives home to a man who has any vision of the betterment of the whole, is the low-grade intelligence of the average human being. Every man who has ever worked for a day out of himself has met this fierce and flogging truth. The personal answer to this, which the workman finally makes, may be of three kinds: He may desert his

vision entirely and return to operate among the infinite small doors of the many—which is cowardice and the grimmest failure. He may abandon the many and devote himself to the few who understand; and this opens the way to the subtler and more powerful devils which beset and betray human understanding, for we are not heroically moulded by those who love us but by the grinding of those who revile. If a key does not fit, it must be ground; and to be ground, its wards made true and sharp, it must be held somehow in a vise. The grinding from above will not bite otherwise. So it is with the workman. He must fix himself first in the knowledge of the world. . . .

The workman of the true way abandons neither his vision nor the world. Somehow to impregnate the world with his particular vision—all good comes from that. In a word, the workman either plays to world entirely, which is failure; to his elect entirely, which is apt to be a greater failure; or, intrenched in the world and thrilling with aspiration, he may exert a levitating influence upon the whole, just as surely as wings beat upward. There are days of blindness, and the years are long, but in this latest struggle a man forgets himself, which is the primary victory.

The real workman then—vibrating between compassion and contempt—his body vised in the world, his spirit struggling upward, performs his task. When suddenly freed, he finds that he has

done well. If one is to have wings, and by that I don't mean feathers but the intrinsic levitating force of the spiritual life, be very sure they must be grown here, and gain their power of pinion in the struggle to lift matter.

13

NATURAL CRUELTY

IN dealing with the young, especially with little boys, one of the first things to establish is gentleness to animals. Between the little boy and the grown man all the states of evolution are vaguely reviewed, as they are, in fact, in that more rapid and mysterious passage between conception and birth. Young nations pass through the same phases, and some of them are abominable. The sense of power is a dangerous thing. The child feels it in his hands, and the nation feels it in its first victory. . . . In the Chapel during a period of several days we talked about the wonder of animals (the little boys of the house present) and the results were so interesting that I put together some of the things discussed in the following form, calling the paper Adventures in Cruelty:

As a whole, the styles in cruelty are changing. Certain matters of charity as we used to regard

them are vulgar now. I remember when a great sign, THE HOME OF THE FRIENDLESS, used to stare obscenely at thousands of city school children, as we passed daily through a certain street. Though it is gone now, something of the curse of it is still upon the premises. I always think of what a certain observer said:

"You would not think the Christ had ever come to a world, where men could give such a name to a house of love-babies."

I remember, too, when there formerly appeared from time to time on the streets, during the long summers, *different* green-blue wagons. The drivers were different, too—I recall one was a hunchback. These outfits formed one of the fascinating horrors of our bringing-up—the fork, the noose, the stray dog tossed into a maddened pulp of stray dogs, the door slammed, and no word at all from the driver—nothing we could build on, or learn his character by. He was a part of the law, and we were taught then that the law was everlastingly right, that we must grind our characters against it. . . . But the green-blue wagons are gone, and the Law has come to conform a bit with the character of youth.

The time is not long since when we met our adventures in cruelty alone—no concert of enlightened citizens on these subjects—and only the very few had found the flaw in the gospel that God had made the animals, and all the

little animals, for delectation and service of man. Possibly there is a bit of galvanic life still in the teaching, but it cannot be said to belong to the New Age.

Economic efficiency has altered many styles for the better. Formerly western drovers used to drive their herds into the brush for the winters. The few that the winter and the wolves didn't get were supposed to be hardy enough to demand a price. It was found, however, that wintering-out cost the beasts more in vitality than they would spend in seven years of labour; that the result was decrepit colts and stringy dwarfs for the beef market. Also there was agitation on the subject, and the custom passed. City men who owned horses in large numbers found their *efficiency* brought to a higher notch at the sacrifice of a little more air and food, warmth and rest. There is a far-drive to this appeal, and there are those who believe that it will see us through to the millennium.

A woman told this story: "When I was a child in the country there was an old cow that we all knew and loved. She was red and white like Stevenson's cow that ate the meadow flowers. Her name was Mary—Mr. Devlin's Mary. The Devlin children played with us, and they were like other children in every way, only a little fatter and ruddier perhaps. The calves disappeared annually (one of the mysteries) and the

Devlin children were brought up on Mary's milk. It wasn't milk, they said, but pure cream. We came to know Mary, because she was always on the roadside—no remote back-pastures for her. She loved the children and had to know what passed. We used to deck her with dandelions, and often just as we were getting the last circlet fastened, old Mary would tire of the game and walk sedately out of the ring—just as she would when a baby calf had enough or some novice had been milking too long. I have been able to understand how much the Hindus think of their cattle just by thinking of Mary. For years we passed her—to and from school. It was said that she could negotiate any gate or lock.

"Well, on one Spring morning, as we walked by the Devlin house, we saw a crated wagon with a new calf inside, and they were tying Mary behind. She was led forth. I remember the whites of her eyes and her twisted head. Only that, in a kind of sickening and pervading blackness. The calf cried to her, and Mary answered, and thus they passed. . . . 'But she is old. She dried up for a time last summer,' one of the Devlin children said.

"Devlin wasn't a bad man, a respected churchman. . . . I spoke to certain grown-ups, but did not get the sense of tragedy that was mine. No one criticised Devlin. It was the custom, they said. . . . Even the butcher had heard of old

Mary. . . . You see how ungrippable, how abstract the tragedy was for a child—but you never can know what it showed me of the world. None of us who wept that day ate meat for many days. I have not since. I cannot."

Her story reminded me sharply of a recent personal experience. I had been thinking of buying a cow. It appears that there are milch-cows and beef-cows. Country dealers prefer a blend, as you shall see. I said I wanted butter and milk, intimating the richer the better; also I wanted a front-yard cow, if possible. . . . There was a gentle little Jersey lady that had eyes the children would see fairies in——

"Yes, she's a nice heifer," the man said, "but now I'm a friend of yours——"

"I appreciate that. Isn't she well?"

"Yes, sound as a trivet."

"A good yielder?"

"All of that."

"What's the matter?"

"Well, a cow is like a peach-tree, she doesn't last forever. After the milktime, there isn't much left for beef——"

"But I don't want to eat her."

"But as an investment—you see, that's where the Jerseys fall down—they don't weigh much at the butcher's."

The styles change more slowly in the country. . . . I found this good economy so prevalent as

to be rather high for humour. In fact, that's exactly why you can't get "grand" stakes in the country. . . . I related the episode to a man interested in the prevention of cruelty. He said:

"Don't blame it all on the country. I saw one of those butcher's abominations in a city street yesterday—cart with crate, new calf inside, old moaning mammy dragged after to the slaughter—a very interesting tumbril, but she hadn't conspired against the government. For a year she had given the best of her body to nourish that little bewildered bit of veal—and now we were to eat what was left of her. . . . Also I passed through a certain railway yard of a big city last holidays. You recall the zero weather? Tier on tier of crated live chickens were piled there awaiting shipment—crushed into eight-inch crates, so that they could not lift their heads. Poe pictured an atrocious horror like that—a man being held in a torture-cell in such a position that he could not stand erect. It almost broke a man's nerve, to say nothing of his neck, just to read about it. . . . I had seen this thing before—yet never as this time. Queer how these things happen! A man must see a thing like that just right, in full meaning, and then tell it again and again —until enough others see, to make it dangerous to ship that way. I got the idea then, 'Suppose a man would make it his life-work to change those crates—to make those crates such a stench and

abomination, that poultry butchers would not dare use them. What a worthy life work that would be!' . . . And then I thought, 'Why leave it for the other fellow?' . . . The personal relation is everything," he concluded.

There was something round and equable about this man's talk, and about his creeds. He was "out for the chickens," as he expressed it. This task came to him and he refused to dodge. Perhaps he will be the last to see the big thing that he is doing, for he is in the ruck of it. And then very often a man sets out to find a passage to India and gets a New World. In any case, to put four inches on the chicken-crates of America is very much a man's job, when one considers the relation of tariff to bulk in freight and express.

Yet there is *efficiency* even to that added expenditure—a very thrilling one, if the public would just stop once and think. If you have ever felt the heat of anger rising in your breast, given way to it, and suffered the lassitude and self-hatred of reaction, it will be easy for you to believe the demonstrable truth that anger is a poison. Fear is another; and the breaking down of tissue as a result of continued torture is caused by still another poison. The point is that we consume these poisons. The government is very active in preventing certain diseased meats from reaching our tables, but these of fear, rage, blood-madness and

last-days-of-agony are subtler diseases which have so far had little elucidation.

Though this is not a plea for vegetarianism, one should not be allowed to forget too long the tens of thousands of men and boys who are engaged in slaughtering—nor the slaughtered. . . . Long ago there was a story of an opera cloak for which fifty birds of paradise gave their life and bloom. It went around the world, that story, and there is much beauty in the wild to-day because of it. The trade in plumes has suffered. Styles change—but there is much Persian lamb still worn. Perhaps in good time the Messiah of the lambs will come forth, as the half-frozen chickens found theirs in the city yards.

The economical end will not cover all the sins; that is, the repression of cruelty on an efficiency basis. Repressed cruelty will not altogether clear the air, nor laws. A true human heart cannot find its peace, merely because cruelty is concealed. There was a time when we only hoped to spare the helpless creatures a tithe of their suffering, but that will not suffice now. A clean-up is demanded and the forces are at work to bring it about.

Formerly it was granted that man's rise was mainly on the necks of his beasts, but that conception is losing ground. Formerly, it was enough for us to call attention on the street to the whip of a brutal driver, but it has been found that

more is required. You may threaten him with the police, even with lynching; you may frighten him away from his manhandling for the moment —but in some alley, he is alone with his horse afterward. His rage has only been flamed by resistance met. It is he who puts the poor creature to bed.

The fear of punishment has always been ineffectual in preventing crime, for the reason that the very passion responsible for the crime masters the fear. . . . It is difficult to discuss these ravages on a purely physical basis, for the ramifications of cruelty are cumulatively intense, the higher they are carried. Ignorance is not alone the lack of knowing things; it is the coarseness of fibre which resists all the fairer and finer bits of human reality. Just so long as men fail to master the animals of which they are composed, the poor beasts about them will be harrowingly treated.

So there are many arms to the campaign. Specific facts must be supplied for the ignorant, an increasingly effective effort toward the general education of the public; but the central energy must be spent in lifting the human heart into warmth and sensitiveness.

On a recent January night, an animal welfare society had a call to one of the city freight-yards where a carload of horses was said to be freezing to death. It was not a false alarm. The agents

knew that these were not valuable horses. Good stock is not shipped in this precarious fashion. It was a load of the feeble and the aged and maimed—with a few days' work left in them, if continuously whipped, gathered from the fields and small towns by buyers who could realise a dollar or two above the price of the hide—to meet the demand of the alley-minded of the big city. The hard part is that it costs just as much pain for such beasts to freeze to death, in the early stages, at least. The investment would have been entirely spoiled had it been necessary to furnish blankets for the shipment.

The public reading a story of this adventure, remarks, "Why, I thought all that was stopped long ago——"

Just as underwriters will gamble on anything, even to insure a ship that is to run a blockade, if the premium is right—so will a certain element of trade take a chance on shipping such horses, until the majority of people are awake and responsive to the impulses of humanity. It isn't being sanctified to be above cruelty; it is only the beginning of manhood proper.

The newspapers and all publicity methods are of great service, but the mightiest effort is to lift the majority of the people out of the lethargy which renders them immune to pangs of the daily spectacle. The remarkable part is that the people

are ready, but they expect the stimulus to come from without instead of from within.

Custom is a formidable enemy—that herd instinct of a people which causes it to accept as right the methods of the many. Farmers to-day everywhere are following the manner of Devlin; yet the story brings out the lineaments of most shocking and unforgetable cruelty. How can one expect effective revulsion on the part of a band of medical students when the bearded elders bend peering over their vivisections? What are children to do when their parents shout *mad-dog* and run for clubs and pitch-forks at the passing of a thirst-frenzied brute; or the teamster when the blacksmith does not know the anatomy of a horse's foot? Ignorance is the mother of cruelty, and custom is the father.

The great truths that will fall in due time upon all the sciences—upon astronomy, pathology, even upon criminology—are the results of flashes of intuition. Again and again this is so. The material mind is proof against intuition, and of necessity cruel. It keeps on with its burnings, its lancings, its brandings, its collections of skulls and cadavers, until its particular enlightener appears. The dreadful thing to consider is that each department of cruelty brings its activity up into a frightful state of custom and action, before the exposures begin.

Which brings us to the very pith of the en-

deavour: The child is ready to change—that is the whole story. The child is fluid, volatile, receptive to reason. In all our world-life there is nothing so ostentatiously or calamitously amiss as the ignorance and customs of our relation to children. The child will change in a day. The child is ready for the beauty and the mystery of mercy. The prison-house must not be closed to sensitiveness and intuition. If that can be prevented the problem of animal welfare is solved, and in the end we will find that much more has been done for our children than for the animals. So often again we set out to discover the passage to India and reach the shores of a New World.

14

CHILDREN CHANGE

THE first of the young men to come to Stonestudy followed an attraction which has never been quite definite to me. He was strongly educated, having studied art and life at Columbia and other places. His chief interest at first appeared to be in the oriental philosophy which he alleged to have found in my work. After that he intimated that he aspired to write. The second young man came from Dakota, also a college-bred. A teacher there wrote to me about him. I looked at some of his work, and I found in it potentialities of illimitable promise. I was not so excited as I would have been had I not met this discovery in other cases from the generation behind us. Their fleets are upon every sea.

The need of a living was somehow arranged. I worked with the two a while in the evening on short manuscript matters. In fact, the dollar-end has not pinched so far; and they help a while in

the garden in the afternoons, designating the period, Track, as they named the little class after mid-day, Chapel. At first, I was in doubt as to whether they really belonged to the class. It was primarily designed for the younger minds—and I was unwilling to change that.

You would think it rather difficult—I know I did—to bring the work in one class for ages ranging from eleven to twice that. I said to the young men:

"Of course it is *their* hour. I don't want to bore you, but come if you like. Be free to discontinue, if what you get isn't worth the time. As for me—the young ones come first, and I am not yet ready for two classes."

They smiled. About a week later, they came in a half-hour late. It happened we had been having an exceptionally good hour.

"I would rather have you not come, if you cannot come on time," I said.

They sat down without any explanation. It was long afterward that I heard they had been busy about a trunk; that their delay had been unavoidable in getting it through customs, a barbarous and war-making inconvenience which cannot flourish much longer. And one day we went out into the garden together for the hoes, and the Dakota young man said:

"Chapel is the best hour of the day——"

He said more, and it surprised me from one

who talked so rarely. This younger generation, as I have said, has an impediment of speech. It is not glib nor explanatory. . . . One of the happiest things that has ever befallen me is the spirit of the Chapel. It happened that The Abbot brought in a bit of work that repeated a rather tiresome kind of mis-technicality—an error, I had pointed out to him before. I took him to task—lit into him with some force upon his particular needs of *staying down* a little each day—or the world would never hear his voice. . . . In the silence I found that the pain was no more his than the others in the room—that they were all sustaining him, their hearts like a hammock for him, their minds in a tensity for me to stop. . . . I did. The fact is, I choked at the discovery. . . . They were very far from any competitive ideal. They were one—and there's something immortal about that. It gave me the glimpse of what the world will some time be. There is nothing that so thrills as the many made one. . . . Power bulks even from this little group; the sense of self flees away; the glow suffuses all things—and we rise together—a gold light in the room that will come to all the world.

It is worth dwelling upon—this spirit of the Chapel. . . . The war has since come to the world, and many who are already toiling for the reconstruction write to the Study from time to time—from different parts of the world. I read

the class a letter recently from a young woman in England. It was like the cry of a soul, and as I looked up from the paper, a glow was upon their faces. A group of workers in the Western coast send us their letters and actions from time to time, and another group from Washington. All these are placed before the Chapel kindred for inspiration and aliment.

"As this is the time for you to be here," I said one day, "the time shall come for you to go forth. All that you are bringing to yourselves from these days must be tried out in the larger fields of the world. You will meet the world in your periods of maturity and genius—at the time of the world's greatest need. That is a clue to the splendid quality of the elect of the generation to which you belong. You are watching the end of the bleakest and most terrible age—the breaking down at last of an iron age. It has shattered into the terrible disorder of continental battle-fields. But you belong to the builders, whose names will be called afterward."

. . . I have come to the Chapel torn and troubled; and the spirit of it has calmed and restored me. They are so ready; they listen and give. . . . We watch the world tearing down—from this quietude. We have no country but God's country. Though we live in the midst of partisanship and

madness, we turn our eyes ahead and build our thoughts upon the New Age—just children.

. . . For almost a year I had been preparing a large rose-bed—draining, under-developing the clay, softening the humus. The bed must be developed first. The world is interested only in the bloom, in the fruit, but the florists talk together upon their work before the plants are set. The roses answered—almost wonderfully. They brought me the old romance of France and memories of the Ireland that has vanished. This point was touched upon in the Foreword—how in the joy of the roses that answered months after the labour was forgotten, it suddenly occurred what a marvel is the culture of the human soul.

The preparation of the mind is paramount. Not a touch of care or a drop of richness is lost; not an ideal fails. These young minds bring me the thoughts I have forgotten—fruited thoughts from their own boughs. They are but awakened. They are not different from other children. Again and again it has come to me from the wonderful unfoldings under my eyes, that for centuries the world has been maiming its children—that only those who were wonderfully strong could escape, and become articulate as men.

Again, the splendid fact is that children change. You touch their minds and they are not the same the next day.

. . . I do not see how preachers talk Sunday

after Sunday to congregations, which, though edified, return to their same little questionable ways. There are people in the cults who come to teachers and leaders to be ignited. They swim away with the new message; they love it and are lifted, but it subsides within them. In their depression and darkness they seek the outer ignition again. We must be self-starters. . . . I once had a class of men and women in the city. We met weekly and some of the evenings were full of delight and aspiration. For two winter seasons we carried on the work. After a long summer we met together and even in the joy of reunion, I found many caught in their different conventions—world ways, the obvious and the temporal, as if we had never breathed the open together. It was one of the great lessons to me—to deal with the younger generation. I sometimes think the younger the better. I have recalled again and again the significance of the Catholic priests' saying—"Give us your child until he is seven only——"

In one year I have been so accustomed to see young people change—to watch the expression of their splendid inimitable selves, that it comes like a grim horror how the myriads of children are literally sealed in the world.

We believe that God is in everything; that we would be fools, or at best innocuous angels if there were not evil in the world for us to be ground upon and master. We are held and refined be-

tween the two attractions—one of the earth and the other a spiritual uplift. We believe that the sense of Unity is the first deep breath of the soul, the precursor of illumination; that the great Brotherhood conception must come from this sense. Next to this realisation, we believe that man's idea of time is an illusion, that immortality is here and now; that nothing can happen to us that is not the right good thing; that the farther and faster we go, the more beautiful and subtle is the system of tests which are played upon us; that our first business in life is to reconcile these tests to our days and hours, to understand and regard them from the standpoint of an unbroken life, not as a three-score-and-ten adventure here. You would think these things hard to understand—they are not. The littlest ones have it—the two small boys of seven and nine, who have not regularly entered the Chapel.

The little girl brought us some of these thoughts in her own way, and without title:

The soul is very old. It has much to say, if one learns to listen. If one makes his body fine, he can listen better. And if one's body is fine from the beginning, it is because he has learned to listen before. All that we have learned in past ages is coiled within. The good a man does is all kept in the soul, and all his lessons. The little fairy people that played around him and told him queer

things when he was first a rock, then flowers and trees, are still printed in his soul. The difficult thing is to bring them out into the world, to tell them. By listening, in time, the soul's wonderful old voice will tell us all things, so that we can write and tell about them. Every thought we try so hard to get, is there. It is like losing track of a thimble. If you know it is somewhere and you need it badly enough, you will find it.

The brain cannot get for us a mighty thought. The brain can only translate soul-talk into words. It was not the *brain* which told Fichte, a long, long time ago, that Germany was going wrong and that *he* should fix it by telling them the right way to go; but it was the brain that told the people not to listen to him, but to go on just as they had been.

It is always the brain that makes one add columns correctly, and learn the number tables and how to spell words. But these will come themselves, without a life spent studying them. After a life of this kind, the soul is not a bit farther ahead than it was when coming into the world in the body of a baby.

The brain will also show one the way to make money, perhaps lots of it, the most terrible thing that can happen to you, unless, as Whitman says, "you shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve."

15

A MAN'S OWN

THE first and general objection to the plan made much of here, that of educating young minds in small classes with a design toward promoting the individual expression, is that the millions of our rising race could not be handled so; in fact, that it is a physical and economic impossibility.

The second objection is that I have in a sense called my own to me; that the great mass of children could not be ignited except by an orderly and imperceptible process, either from within or without. In fact, it has been said repeatedly that I deal with extraordinary soil. I wish to place the situation here even more intimately, in order to cover these and other objections, for I believe they are to be covered in this book.

. . . In the last days of the building here, when the fireplace of the study was the only thing we had in the way of a kitchen-range, when the places of books became repositories for dishes, and the

desk a dining-table—the little afternoon Chapel was of course out of the question for some weeks. . . . I used to see The Abbot (longer-legged each week) making wide circles against the horizon, his head turned this way, like a bird's in flight. And The Valley-Road Girl, whom I met rarely, shook her head at me once, though I had to look close to catch it. The little girl declared, with a heart-broken look, that the Chapel would never be the same again after cabbage had been cooked there.

"But it was a wonderful young cabbage from the garden," I said. "And then the Chapel cannot be hurt by being so differently valuable just now. It is seeing us through these hard days."

But *I* missed something through these days; the fact of the matter is, my thoughts were not so buoyant as usual through the last half of the days, nor nearly so decent. Something I missed deeply, and moved about as one does trying to recall a fine dream. The little group had given me a joy each day that I hadn't realised adequately. That was the secret. I had been refreshed daily as a workman; learned each day things that I didn't know; and because of these hours, I had expressed better in the writing part of the life, the things I did know. Certainly they taught me the needs of saying exactly what I meant. All of which to suggest again that teaching is a mutual service. Just here I want to reprint the first and last thought, so far as I see it, as regards the first ob-

jection: These paragraphs are taken from a former essay on Work, published in the book called *Midstream*.

"Work and life to me mean the same thing. Through work in my case, a transfer of consciousness was finally made from animalism to a certain manhood. This is the most important transaction in the world. Our hereditary foes are the priests and formalists who continue to separate a man's work from his religion. A working idea of God comes to the man who has found his work—and the splendid discovery invariably follows, that his work is the best expression of God. All education that does not first aim to find the student's life-work is vain, often demoralising; because, if the student's individual force is little developed, he sinks deeper into the herd, under the levelling of the class-room.

"There are no men or women alive, of too deep visioning, nor of too lustrous a humanity, for the task of showing boys and girls their work. No other art answers so beautifully. This is the intensive cultivation of the human spirit. This is world-parenthood, the divine profession.

"*I would have my country call upon every man who shows vision and fineness in any work, to serve for an hour or two each day, among the schools of his neighbourhood, telling the children the mysteries of his daily task—and watching for his own among them.*

"All restlessness, all misery, all crime, is the result of the betrayal of one's inner life. One's work is not being done. You would not see the hordes rushing to pluck fruits from a wheel, nor this national madness for buying cheap and selling dear—if as a race we were lifted into our own work.

"The value of each man is that he has no duplicate. The development of his particular effectiveness on the constructive side is the one important thing for him to begin. A man is at his best when he is at his work; his soul breathes then, if it breathes at all. Of course, the lower the evolution of a man, the harder it is to find a task for him to distinguish; but here is the opportunity for all of us to be more eager and tender.

"When I wrote to Washington asking how to plant asparagus, and found the answer; when I asked about field-stones and had the output of the Smithsonian Institute turned over to me, my throat choked; something sang all around; the years I had hated put on strange brightenings. I had written Home for guidance. Our national Father had answered. Full, eager and honest, the answer came—the work of specialists which had moved on silently for years. I saw the brotherhood of the race in that—for that can only come to be in a Fatherland.

"Give a man his work and you may watch at your leisure, the clean-up of his morals and man-

ners. Those who are best loved by the angels, receive not thrones, but a task. I would rather have the curse of Cain, than the temperament to choose a work because it is easy.

"Real work becomes easy only when the man has perfected his instrument, the body and brain. Because this instrument is temporal, it has a height and limitation to reach. There is a year in which the sutures close. That man is a master, who has fulfilled his possibilities — whether tile-trencher, stone-mason, writer, or a carpenter hammering his periods with nails. Real manhood makes lowly gifts significant; the work of such a man softens and finishes him, renders him plastic to finer forces.

"No good work is easy. The apprenticeship, the refinement of body and brain, is a novitiate for the higher life, for the purer receptivity—and this is a time of strain and fatigue, with breaks here and there in the cohering line.

". . . The best period of a man's life; days of safety and content; long hours in the pure trance of work; ambition has ceased to burn, doubt is ended, the finished forces turn *outward* in service. According to the measure of the giving is the replenishment in vitality. The pure trance of work, the different reservoirs of power opening so softly; the instrument in pure listening—long forenoons passing, without a single instant of self-conscious-

ness, desire, enviousness, without even awareness of the body. . . .

"Every law that makes for man's finer workmanship makes for his higher life. The mastery of self prepares man to make his answer to the world for his being. The man who has mastered himself is one with all. Castor and Pollux tell him immortal love stories; all is marvellous and lovely from the plant to the planet, because man is a lover, when he has mastered himself. All the folded treasures and open highways of the mind, its multitude of experiences and unreckonable possessions—are given over to the creative and universal force—the same force that is lustrous in the lily, incandescent in the suns, memorable in human heroism, immortal in man's love for his fellow man.

"This giving force alone holds the workman true through his task. He, first of all, feels the uplift; he, first of all, is cleansed by the power of the superb life-force passing through him. . . . This is rhythm; this is the cohering line; this is being the One. But there are no two instruments alike, since we have come up by different roads from the rock; and though we achieve the very sanctity of self-command, our inimitable hallmark is wrought in the fabric of our task."

Guiding one's own for an hour or two each day is not a thing to do for money. The more valuable

a man's time (if his payment in the world's standards happens to be commensurate with his skill) the more valuable he will be to his little group. He will find himself a better workman for expressing himself to his own, giving the fruits of his life to others. He will touch immortal truths before he has gone very far, and Light comes to the life that contacts such fine things. He will see the big moments of his life in a way that he did not formerly understand. Faltering will more and more leave his expression, and the cohering line of his life will become more clearly established.

A man's own are those who are awaiting the same call that he has already answered. Browning stood amazed before a man who had met Shelley and was not different afterward—a man who could idly announce that he had met the poet Shelley and not accept it as the big event of a period. Browning described his dismay at the other in the story of finding the eagle feather. He did not know the name of the moor; perhaps men had made much of it; perhaps significant matters of history had been enacted on that moor, but they were nothing to the mystic. One square of earth there, the size of a human hand, was sacred to him, because it was just on that spot that he found an eagle's feather.

I stood waist-high to Conan Doyle years ago—was speechless and outraged that groups of people who had listened to him speak, could gather about

afterward, talk and laugh familiarly, beg his autograph. . . . Had he spoken a word or a sentence to me, it would not have been writ in water. . . . There is no hate nor any love like that which the men who are called to the same task have for each other. The masters of the crafts know each other; the mystics of the arts know each other.

The preparation for the tasks of the world is potential in the breasts of the children behind us. For each there is a magic key; and that man holds it who has covered the journey, or part of it, which the soul of a child perceives it must set out upon soon. The presence of a good workman will awaken the potential proclivity of the child's nature, as no other presence can do. Every autobiography tells the same story—of a certain wonder-moment of youth, when the ideal appeared, and all energies were turned thereafter to something concrete which that ideal signified. Mostly the "great man" did not know what he had done for the boy. . . . I would have the great man know. I would have him seek to perform this miracle every day.

There's always a hush in the room when some one comes to me saying, "There is a young man who dreams of writing. He is very strange. He does not speak about it. He is afraid to show what he has done. I wanted to bring him to you—but he would not come. I think he did not dare."

Formerly I would say, "Bring him over some time," but that seldom brought the thing about.

A man should say, "*Lead me to him now!*" . . . Those who want to write for money and for the movies come. They put stamps upon letters they write. God knows they are not ashamed to come and ask for help, and explain their symptoms of yearning and show their structure of desire. . . . The one who dares not come; who dares not mail the letter he has written to you, who is speechless if you seek him out, full of terror and torture before you—take him to your breast for he is your own. Children you have fathered may not be so truly yours as he. . . . Do you want a slave, a worshipper—seek out your own. You want nothing of the sort, but you alone can free the slave, you alone can liberate his worship to the task. He can learn from you in a week what it would take years of misery in the world to teach him. You have done in a way the thing he wants to do—that's the whole magic. You have fitted somehow to action the dream that already tortures his heart. There is nothing so pure as work in the world. There is something sacred about a man's work that is not elsewhere in matter. Teaching is a mutual service. . . . It is not that you want his reverence, but because he has reverence, he is potentially great.

The ignition of one youth, the finding of his work for one youth, is a worthy life task. The same possibility of service holds true for all kinds of workmen; these things are not alone for the

artists and the craftsmen and the professions. There is one boy to linger about the forge of an artisan, after the others have gone. I would have the artisan forget the thing he is doing, to look into the eyes of that boy—and the chemist, the electrician, the florist.

It is true that the expression called for here is mainly through written words, but that is only our particularity. It need not be so. . . . The work here would not do for all. . . . A young woman came and sat with us for several days. She was so still that I did not know what was happening in her mind. My experience with the others had prevailed to make me go slowly, and not to judge. We all liked her, all learned to be glad that she had come. I asked no expression from her for several days. When I finally suggested something of the kind, I felt the sudden terror in the room. Her expression came in a very brief form, and it showed me the bewilderment with which she had encountered the new points of view in the Chapel. I learned afresh that one must not hurry; that my first work was to put to rest her fears of being called upon. I impressed upon the class the next day that we have all the time there is; that we want nothing; that our work is to establish in due time the natural expressions of our faculties. To the young woman in particular, I said that when she felt like it she could write again.

Presently there was a day's absence and another. I sent the little girl to see if she were ill. The little girl was gone the full afternoon. All I ever got from that afternoon was this sentence:

". . . She is going to be a nurse."

I have wondered many times if she would have become a nurse had I allowed her to sit unexpressed for a month instead of a week; permitting her surely to find her ease and understanding of us. . . . Still we must have nurses.

. . . And then the Columbia young man—a big fellow and a soul. I had talked to him for many nights in an Upper Room class in the city. He took a cottage here through part of the first summer, before the Chapel began; then, through the months of Chapel and story work in the evening, I had good opportunity to become acquainted with the processes of his mind and heart. Of the last, I have nothing but admiration; invincible integrity, a natural kindness, a large equipment after the manner of the world's bestowal—but Inertia.

Now Inertia is the first enemy of the soul. It is caused by pounds. I do not mean that because a body is big, or even because a body is fat, that it is of necessity an impossible medium for the expression of the valuable inner life. There have been great fat men whose spiritual energy came forth to intensify the vibrations of the race, to say

nothing of their own poundage. It is less a matter of weight after all than texture; still their fat was a handicap.

These facts are indubitable: Sensuousness makes weight in bulls and men; all the habits that tend to put on flesh tend to stifle the expression of the inner life. All the habits which tend to express the human spirit bring about a refinement of the body. More spiritual energy is required to express itself through one hundred and ninety pounds than through one hundred and forty pounds. Accordingly as we progress in the expression of the spiritual life, the refinement of our bodies takes place. As a whole, the great servers of men carry little excess tissue; as a whole in every fabrication of man and nature—the finer the work, the finer the instrument.

The body is continually levitated through spiritual expression and continually the more responsive to gravitation by sensuous expression.

The exquisite blending of maiden pink and sunlight gold that is brought forth in the Clovelly tea-rose could not be produced upon the petals of a dahlia or a morning-glory. That ineffable hue is not a matter of pigment alone; it can only be painted upon a surface fine enough. The texture of the tea-rose petals had to be evolved to receive it. . . . You must have gold or platinum points for the finest work; the brighter the light the finer the carbon demanded. It is so with our bodies.

We live either for appetites or aspirations. The flood of outgoing human spirit, in its passionate gifts to men, incorporates its living light within the cells of our voice-cords and brain and hands. With every thought and emotion we give ourselves to the earth or give ourselves to the sky.

The soul is not inert; its instrument, the body, is so, by its very nature, formed of matter. The earth has required the quickening of countless ages to produce the form that we see—the gracious beauties of the older trees, the contour of cliffs. The very stem and leaf of a Clovelly rose is beautiful.

The finest rose of this season, when cut at the end of its budding mystery, left nothing but a little grey plant that you could cover in your hand. You would not think that such a plant could grow a bachelor's button; and yet it gave up an individual that long will be remembered in human minds. I saw that rose in the arch of a child's hand—and all about were hushed by the picture. For three days it continued to expand, and for three days more it held its own great beauty and then showered itself with a laugh upon a desk of blackened oak. We will not forget that inner ardency—the virgin unfolding to the sun—born of some great passion that seemed poised between earth and heaven—and expectant of its own great passion's maturity.

I went back to the little plant, called the chil-

dren to it and all who would come. It was grey and neutral like the ground. I think a low song of content came from it. The Dakotan said so, and he hears these things. I thought of the ecstasy of the great givings—the ecstasy of the little old grey woman who had mothered a prophet and heard his voice afar in the world.

I showed them the lush and vulgar stems of the American beauties, whose marketable excellence is measured by size, as the cabbage is, and whose corresponding red is the red of an apoplectic throat. I showed them the shoulders and mane of a farm-horse and then the shoulders and mane of a thoroughbred. Upon the first the flies fed without touching a nerve; but the satin-skinned thoroughbred had to be kept in a darkened stall. The first had great foliages of coarse mane and tail; the other, a splendid beast that would kill himself for you, did not run to hair.

We stand to-day the product of our past ideals. We are making our future in form and texture and dynamics by the force of our present hour idealism. Finer and finer, more and more immaterial and lustrous we become, according to the use and growth of our real and inner life. It is the quickening spirit which beautifies the form, and draws unto itself the excellences of nature. The spiritual person is lighter for his size, longer-lived, of more redundant health, of a more natural elasticity, capable of infinitely greater physical, men-

tal, and moral tasks, than the tightly compacted earth-bound man. . . . That is not a mere painter's flourish which adds a halo to the head of a saint. It is there if we see clearly. If the sanctity is radiant, the glow is intense enough to refract the light, to cast a shadow, to be photographed, even caught with the physical eye.

16

THE PLAN IS ONE

I WAS relating the experience of the Columbian. In his case there had been much time, so there could be no mistake. He had devoted himself to making and keeping a rather magnificent set of muscles which manifested even through white man's clothing. He did this with long days of sailing and swimming, cultivating his body with the assiduity of a convalescent. . . . I told him in various ways he was not getting himself out of his work; explained that true preparation is a tearing off of husks one after another; that he was a fine creation in husk, but that he must get down to the quick before he could taste or feel or see with that sensitiveness which would make any observation of his valuable. With all this body-building, he was in reality only covering himself the thicker. If a man does this sort of thing for a woman's eye, he can only attract a creature of

blood and iron whose ideal is a policeman—a very popular ideal. . . .

For two or three days he would work terrifically, then, his weight besetting, he would placate himself with long tissue-feeding sports. I told him that he had everything to build upon; that true strength really begins where physical strength ends; that all that he had in equipment must be set in order and integrated with his own intrinsic powers, it being valueless otherwise. I pointed out that he was but a collector of things he could not understand, because he did not use them; that the great doers of the world had toiled for years upon years, as he did not toil for one week's days successively. . . . It would not do, except for short intervals, and it came to me that my best service was to get out from under. I told him so, and the manliness of his acceptance choked me. I told him to go away, but to come again later if he mastered Inertia in part. . . . It was not all his fault. From somewhere, an income reached him regularly, a most complete and commanding curse for any boy.

. . . I do not believe in long vacations. Children turned loose to play for ten weeks without their tasks, are most miserable creatures at the end of the first fortnight. They become more at ease as the vacation period advances, but that is because the husk is thickening, a most dangerous accretion. The restlessness is less apparent be-

cause the body becomes heavy with play. It all must be worn down again, before the fitness of faculty can manifest.

If one's body is ill from overexertion, it must rest; if one's mind is ill from nervousness, stimulation, or from excessive brain activity, it must rest; but if one's soul is ill, and this is the difference, nothing but activity will help it, and this activity can only be expressed through the body and mind. Surplus rest of body or mind is a process of overfeeding, which is a coarsening and thickening of tissue, which in its turn causes Inertia, and this word I continually capitalise, for it is the first devil of the soul.

Before every spiritual illumination, this Inertia, in a measure, must be overcome. If you could watch the secret life of the great workers of the world, especially those who have survived the sensuous periods of their lives, you would find them in an almost incessant activity; that their sleep is brief and light, though a pure relaxation; that they do not eat heartily more than once a day; that they reach at times *a great calm*, another dimension of calm entirely from that which has to do with animal peace and repletion. It is the peace of intensive production—and the spectacle of it is best seen when you lift the super from a hive of bees, the spirit of which animates every moving creature to one constructive end. That which emanates from this intensity of action is

calm, is harmony, and harmony is rest. A man does not have to sink into a stupor in order to rest. The hours required for rest have more to do with the amount of food one takes, and the amount of tissue one tears down from bad habits, than from the amount of work done. Absolutely this is true if a man's work is his own peculiar task, for the work a man loves replenishes.

Desire tears down tissue. There is no pain more subtle and terrifying than to want something with fury. To the one who is caught in the rhythm of his task, who can lose himself in it, even the processes which so continually tear down the body are suspended. In fact, if we could hold this rhythm, we could not die.

This is what I would tell you: Rhythm of work is joy. This is the full exercise—soul and brain and body in one. Time does not enter; the self does not enter; all forces of beautifying play upon the life. There is a song from it—that some time all shall hear, the song that mystics have heard from the bees, and from open nature at sunrise, and from all selfless productivity.

One cannot play until one has worked—that is the whole truth. Ask that restless child to put a room in order, to cleanse a hard-wood floor, to polish the bath fixtures. Give him the ideal of cool, flyless cleanliness in a room. Hold the picture of what you want in mind and detail it to him, saying that you will come again and inspect

his work. Watch, if you care, the mystery of it. There will be silence until the thing begins to unfold for him—until the polish comes to wood or metal, until the thing begins to answer and the picture of completion bursts upon him. Then you will hear a whistle or a hum, and nothing will break his theme until the end.

The ideal is everything. You may impress upon him that the light falls differently upon clean things, that the odour is sweet from clean things; that the hand delights to touch them, that the heart is rested when one enters a clean room, because its order is soothing. . . . It isn't the room, after all, that gets all the order and cleansing. The whistle or the hum comes from harmony within.

A man who drank intolerably on occasion told me that the way he "climbed out" was to get to cleaning something; that his thoughts freshened up when he had some new surface to put on an object. He meant that the order came to his chaos, and the influx of life began to cleanse away the litter of burned tissue and the debris of debauch. One cannot keep on thinking evil thoughts while he makes a floor or a gun or a field clean. The thing is well known in naval and military service where bodies of men are kept in order by continual polishing of brasses and decks and accoutrements. A queer, good answer comes to some from softening and cleansing leather. There is a

little boy here whose occasional restlessness is magically done away with, if he is turned loose with sponge and harness-dressing upon a saddle and bridle. He sometimes rebels at first (before the task answers and the picture comes) but presently he will appear wide-eyed and at peace, bent upon showing his work.

Play is a drug and a bore, until one has worked. I do not believe in athletics for athletics' sake. Many young men have been ruined by being inordinately praised for physical prowess in early years. Praise for bodily excellence appeals to deep vanities and is a subtle deranger of the larger faculties of man. The athlete emerges into the world expectant of praise. It is not forthcoming, and his real powers have been untrained to earn the greater reward. Moreover the one-pointed training for some great momentary physical stress, in field events, is a body-breaker in itself, a fact which has been shown all too often and dramatically. Baseball and billiards are great games, but as life-quests—except for the few consummately adapted players whose little orbit of powers finds completion in diamond or green-baized rectangle —the excessive devotion to such play is desolating, indeed, and that which is given in return is fickle and puerile adulation.

A man's work is the highest play. There is nothing that can compare with it, as any of the world's workmen will tell you. It is the thing he

loves best to do—constructive play—giving play to his powers, bringing him to that raptness which is full inner breathing and timeless. . . . We use the woods and shore, water and sand and sun and garden for recreation. In the few hours of afternoon after Chapel until supper, no one here actually produces anything but vegetables and tan, yet the life-theme goes on. We are lying in the sun, and some one speaks; or some one brings down a bit of copy. We listen to the Lake; the sound and feel of water is different every day. We find the stingless bees on the bluff-path on the way to the bathing shore. It is all water and shore, but there is one place where the silence is deeper, the sun-stretch and sand-bar more perfect. We are very particular. One has found that sand takes magnetism from the human body, as fast as sunlight can give it, and he suggests that we rest upon the grass above—that fallow lands are fruitful and full of giving. We test it out like a wine, and decide there is something in it.

There is something in everything.

The Dakotan said (in his clipped way and so low-voiced that you have to bend to hear him) that the birds hear something in the morning that we don't get. He says there is a big harmony over the earth at sunrise, and that the birds catch the music of it, and that songs are their efforts to imitate it. An afternoon was not badly spent in discussing this. We recall the fact that it isn't the

human ear-drum exactly which will get this—if it ever comes to us—and that Beethoven was stone-deaf when he *heard* his last symphonies, the great pastoral and dance and choral pieces, and that he wrote them from his inner listening. Parts of them seem to us strains from that great harmony that the birds are trying to bring out.

We thought there must be such a harmony in a gilding wheat-field. Wheat is good; even its husk is good; beauty and order and service have come to it. There is dissonance from chaos; the song clears as the order begins. Order should have a Capital too. All rising life is a putting of surfaces and deeps in Order. The word Cosmos means Order. . . . Wheat has come far, and one does well to be alone for a time in a golden afternoon in a wheat-field just before cutting. One loves the Old Mother better for that adventure. She must give high for wheat. She must be virgin and strong and come naked and unashamed to the sun to bring forth wheat. She must bring down the spirit of the sun and blend it with her own—for wheat partakes of the *alkahest*. Wheat is a master, an aristocrat.

The Dakotan said that once when he was on the Open Road through the northwest, he slept for two days in a car of wheat, and that it was a bath of power. . . . We thought we would make our beds in wheat, thereafter—but that would be sacrilege.

Then we talked of that mysterious harmony from the beehives, and we saw at once that it has to do with Order, that Inertia was mastered there —that the spirit of wheat has mastered Inertia— so that there is a nobility, even about the golden husk. It occurred to us, of course, then, that all the aristocrats of Nature—rose and wheat and olives and bees and alabaster and grapes—must all have their part of the harmony, for Order has come to their chaos. Their spirit has come forth, as in the face of a far-come child—the brute earth-bound lines of self gone—the theme of life, Service.

I am at the end of Capitals now.

One afternoon we talked about corn—from the fields where the passionate mystic Ruth gleaned, to our own tasseled garden plot. And another day we found the ants enlarging the doors of their tunnels, to let out for the nuptial flight certain winged mistresses. There is something in everything.

Each of us sees it differently. Each of us can take what he sees, after all the rest have told their stories, and make a poem of that. The first wonder of man cannot be conceived until this is realised.

There is an inner correspondence in the awakened human soul for every movement and mystery of Nature. When the last resistance of Inertia is mastered, we shall see that there is no separate-

ness anywhere, no detachment; that the infinite analogies all tell the same story—that the plan is one.

17

THE IRISH CHAPTER

THERE was a row of us preparing for sleep out under the stars—the Dakotan at one side, then two small boys, the little girl and the old man. . . . It was one of those nights in which we older ones decided to tell stories instead of writing them. We had talked long, like true Arabs around a fire on the beach. A South Wind came in and the Lake received and loved it. I asked the Dakotan what the Lake was saying.

"It isn't—it's listening."

It made me think at once of the first movement of Beethoven's sonata, called *Appassionata.* There is one here who plays that, and because it tells him a story, he plays it sometimes rather well and makes the others see. . . . The slow movement is deeply rich; the inspiration seems to go out of the sonata after that, but of the first movement we never tire, and the drama is always keen. It tells the story (to us) of a woman—of love

and life and death. She wants the earth in her love—but her lover is strange and hears persistently a call that is not of earth. The woman tries to hold him. All earth beauty is about her—her love a perfume, a torrent. The voice of destiny speaks to her that it must not be. She rebels. The story rushes on, many voices coming to her re-stating the inexorable truth that he must go.

The same story is told in Coventry Patmore's *Departure*—to us the most magic of all the great little poems. But in *Departure* it is the woman who is called.

. . . Again and again in the *Appassionata*, the word comes to the woman, saying that she will be greater if she speeds him on his way. She will not hear. We sense her splendid tenure of beauty —all the wonder that Mother Earth has given her. . . . One after another the lesser voices have told her that it must be, but she does not obey—and then the Master comes down.

It is one of the most glowing passages in all the literature of tone. The *chelas* have spoken and have not availed. Now the *Guru* speaks. Out of vastness and leisure, out of spaciousness of soul and wisdom, out of the deeps and heights of compassion, the *Guru* speaks—and suddenly the woman's soul turns to him listening. That miracle of listening is expressed in the treble—a low light rippling receptivity. It is like a cup held forth—

or palms held upward. The *Guru* speaks. His will is done.

And that is what I thought of, when the Dakotan said that the Lake was listening. It was listening to the South Wind. . . . That night we talked of Ireland. It may have been the fairies that the little girl always brings; or it may have been that a regiment of Irish troops had just been slaughtered in a cause that had far less significance to Ireland than our child talk by the fire; or it may have been the South Wind that brought us closer to the fairy Isle, for it is the Irish peasants who say to a loved guest at parting:

"May you meet the South Wind."

". . . There isn't really an Ireland any more—just a few old men and a few old, haunting mothers. Ireland is here in America, and the last and stiffest of her young blood is afield for England. Her sons have always taken the field—that is their way—and the mothers have brought in more sons born of sorrow—magic-eyed sons from the wombs of sorrow. Elder brothers afield—fathers gone down overseas—only the fairies left by the hearth for the younger sons to play with. . . . So they have sung strange songs and seen strange lights and moved in rhythms unknown to many men. It is these younger sons who are Ireland now. Not a place, but a passion; not a country, but a romance. . . . They are in the love stories of the world, and they are always looking for

their old companions, the fairies. They find the fairies in the foreign woodlands; they bring the fairies to the new countries. They are in the songs that hush the heart; they are in the mysticism that is moving the sodden world. Because they played with fairies, they were taught to look past and beyond the flesh of faces—past metals and meals and miles. Of the reds and greys and moving golds which they see, the soul of the world loves to listen, for the greatest songs and stories of all are from the Unseen——"

It was the old man dreaming aloud.

"Ireland isn't a place any more. It is a passion infused through the world," he added.

"But the fairies are still there," the little girl said.

"Some are left with the old mothers—yes, some are left. But many have taken the field, and not for the wars."

A four-day moon was dropping fast in the low west. Jupiter was climbing the east in imperial purple—as if to take command. . . . The littlest boy stirred in the arms of the Dakotan and began to speak, staring at the fire. We all turned and bent to listen—and it was that very thing that spoiled it—for the sentence faltered and flew away.

We all wanted to know what had been born in that long silence, for the firelight was bright in two eyes that were very wide and wise—but the

brain was only seven. . . . I left the circle and went up the cliff to find a book in the study—a well-used book, an American book. Returning, I read this from it, holding the page close to the fire:

OLD IRELAND

Far hence, amid an isle of wondrous beauty,
Crouching over a grave, an ancient, sorrowful mother,
Once a queen—now lean and tatter'd, seated on the ground,
Her old white hair drooping dishevel'd round her shoulders;
Long silent—she too long silent—mourning her shrouded hope and heir;
Of all the earth her heart most full of sorrow, because most full of love.

Yet a word, ancient mother;
You need crouch there no longer on the cold ground, with forehead between your knees;
O you need not sit there, veil'd in your old white hair, so dishevel'd;
For know you, the one you mourn is not in that grave;
It was an illusion—the heir, the son you love, was not really dead;
The Lord is not dead—he is risen, young and strong, in another country;
Even while you wept there by your fallen harp, by the grave,
What you wept for, was translated, pass'd from the grave,

The winds favoured and the sea sail'd it,
And now with rosy and new blood,
Moves to-day in a new country.

One by one they dropped off asleep, the little ones first, as the moon went down—their thoughts so full of stars, asking so dauntlessly all questions of world and sky. What I could, I answered, but I felt as young as any. It seemed their dreams were fresher than mine, and their closeness to God. . . . The little girl touched me, as we drifted away——

"May you meet the South Wind!" she whispered.

18

THE BLEAKEST HOUR

IT is a thankless job to raise a voice in the din of things as they are, a voice saying things are wrong. One may do this for years without penetrating the din, so long as he does not become specific. Or one may become a specialist in a certain wrong, gain recognition as a gentle fanatic on a certain subject, do much good with his passion, find certain friends and sterling enemies—and either lose or win, ultimately, according to change in the styles of his time.

Or, with one-pointed desire to change the spirit of things, one may reach the gloomy eminence from which it is perceived that all things are wrong, because the present underlying motive of the whole is wrong. He sees one body of men scrubbing one spot on the carpet, another sewing earnestly at a certain frayed selvage, another trying to bring out the dead colour from a patch that wear and weather have irrevocably changed. He

blesses them all, but his soul cries out for a new carpet—at least, a wholesome and vigorous tubbing of the entire carpet, and a turning over of the whole afterward.

Unless our life here is a sort of spontaneous ebullition out of the bosom of nature, without significance to us before and after, we are moving about our business of house and country and world in a most stupid, cruel and short-sighted fashion. I realise, and this is the wine of life, that the hearts of men are tender and lovable, naturally open and subject by nature to beauty and faith; that the hearts of men, indeed, yearn for that purity of condition in which truth may be the only utterance, and the atmosphere of untruth as revolting as bad air to the nostrils.

But with this realisation appears the facts that the activities in the world of men have little to do with this purity and heart-giving—but with an evil covering, the integument of which is the lie born of self-desire, and the true skin of which is the predatory instinct which has not remotely to do with an erect spine.

Higher days are coming for the expression of the human spirit. There is no doubt about that. But still the men who do the most to hurry them along, find a fight on each ledge of the cliff. Philosophically, it may be said that wars have brought great benefits to the race; that materialism has taught us our place here below as no other passion

could; that trade has wrought its incomparable good to the races of men; that Fear has been the veritable mother of our evolution, its dark shadow forever inciting us, breaking our Inertia, bringing swiftness and strength first to the body, then to brain. Even desire for self, on the long road behind, has been the good angel of our passage, for we had to become splendid beasts before the dimension of man could be builded. . . . All good; mistakes nowhere in the plan.

But the trouble is, the passage of the many from grade to grade is intolerably slow. We had thought the many had finished with war. The few already are many grades ahead of that; the few have seen the virtues die out of patriotism and trade; they have watched the desire for self turn reptile, and hearkened to this truth which is beginning to reverberate around the world: *What is good for beasts is not of necessity good for men.* . . . One recent caller here, male, middle-aged, smilingly discussed all things from the philosophical point of view. I was saying:

"From the nursery to world-clutched retirement from public affairs, a man nowadays is taught more and more to keep his heart-principle locked——"

He smiled: "We have all the time there is. It will all come out right. You fellows excite yourselves and try to change things overnight. Others of us think them over quietly by our fires. That

is the whole difference. Scratch off the veneer, and we are all the same kind of God-yearning animal underneath."

Few sayings ever have hit me harder.

I studied the years' offerings from this man—to his house, to his acquaintances, to the world in general. An irony filled the room, and so intense was it that it seemed to have a colour, a kind of green and yellow vapour. It emanated from the centre of his face. I think the point that animated me especially was that he was in the habit of talking to young men. He had no children of his own. I changed the subject and opened the door—not to hasten his departure but because the air was close.

By every law which makes us hold fast to the memory of saviours and great men, the finest fabric of any race is its pioneers. We are living and putting into action now the dreams of brave spirits who have gone before. Philosophically, even they may have found that the plan is good, but that did not prevent them from giving their lives to lift the soddenness and accelerate the Inertia of the crowds. They took their joy in the great goodness of the plan—only after they had done their best to bring the race more swiftly into its higher destiny. A man does not sit back and allow his children to spend years in learning that which he can explain in a moment from his own experience. . . . I did not answer the philosopher, but many things that occurred from that little talk

were brought out in Chapel during the days which followed—matters that had to do with America and literary workmanship in particular. Certain of the matters we discussed have been written down for expression here:

If some one announced that there lived in the Quattuor Islands a man who knew the exact way to bring into the world, not only the spirit, but the action of *brotherhood* and *fatherland*, there would be some call for maps and steamship passages. If the Quattuor Islands were not already on the maps, they would presently appear, but not before the first pilgrims had set out. And if some one should add that all expression of the arts so far in the world is addled and unsightly compared to that which is about to be, if a certain formula is followed, and that this man in the Quattuor group has the formula—many more would start on the quest, or send their most trusted secretaries.

And yet the truth and the way is all here, and has been uttered again and again by every voice that has lifted itself above the common din.

The wise men carried gifts. You would expect to give something for the secret. You might expect to be called upon to sell all you have and give to the poor. You would not be surprised even if the magnetic Islander said:

"It is not your frankincense and myrrh that I want, though I thank you. That which I have is

for you. I am more anxious for you to know and live it, than you can be to have and hold it. But the mystery is that it will not come to abide with you, while you are passionate for possession. The passion to give to others must be established within you before you can adequately receive——"

You are beginning to see how ancient is the gospel. It *is* old, older than that. It belongs to the foundations. Personally and nationally, the law works the same way. That which is true, is true in all its parts. There is an adjustment by which that which is good for the whole is good for the part; but each, whole and part, nation and man, must have for the first thought, not self-good, but the general good. One nation, so established in this conviction that its actions are automatically founded upon the welfare of the world, could bring about the true world-fatherland in a generation; and one human heart so established begins to touch from the first moment the profound significances of life.

Personally and nationally, this plain but tremendous concept is beginning to manifest itself here in America. I do not write as a patriot. It is not *my country* that is of interest, but humankind. America's political interests, her trade, all her localisations as a separate and bounded people, are inimical to the new enthusiasm. The new social order cannot concern itself as a country apart. American predatory instincts, her self-

worship, her attempt at neutrality while supplying explosives for the European slaughter arenas, her deepening confinement in matter during the past fifty years, have prepared her for the outright demoralisation of war, just as surely as Europe is meeting to-day the red harvest from such instincts and activities. For action invariably follows the thought.

Yet the hearts of men in America are changing. I do not write as a religionist, but as one very much of the world. For the hearts of men do change, and it is only through such changes that the material stagnation of a people can be relieved without deluges of blood.

The high hope is upon us. In being apart from war, America has been enabled to see. One must always remove himself from the ruck to see its movement. Within these western shores, the voices of true inspiration have recently been heard. From a literary standpoint alone, this is the most significant fact since Emerson, Whitman and Thoreau and Lanier took pen in hand, forgetting themselves a little while each day. There is a peculiar strength upon American production of all kinds as a result of the very act of getting out from under European influence.

England and France and Germany have fallen into mere national voices. The voice of the partisan is but a weak treble, against the basic rumble of war. War in this century is a confession, as

suicide is a confession, as every act of blood and rage is a confession, of the triumph of the animal in the human mind. . . . If you received letters from friends in England or Germany or France during the war—friends whom formerly you admired for their culture and acumen—you were struck by the dulness and misery of the communications, the uncentred points of view, the incapacity of human vision in the midst of the heaviness and blackness of life there; if, indeed, you read the newspapers and periodicals of those countries, you required no further proof of the fact—that a nation at war is an obscene nation, its consciousness all driven down into the physical, its voice tonally imperfect from hate and fear, its eyes open to red illusion and not to truth.

Even in America the voice of the nationalist is a part of the old and the unclean. The new social order does not recognise the rights and desires of any isolated people. Humankind is basically *one* in meaning, in aim and in destiny. The differences of nations in relation to the sun's rays and in character of country, environment, race, colour and structure of mind—these are primal values, the very values that will sum up into the essential grandeur of the whole. Personally and nationally there are no duplicates in the social scheme. The instruments of this magnificent orchestra are of infinite diversity, but the harmony is one.

The spiritual source of all human achievement

is already a harmonic whole. That globe is complete. It is our business as men to make a pattern of it in matter—to make the dream come true in flesh, each man and each nation bringing his labour.

If a certain plant, bird, insect, beast, man or nation, rises by intrinsic force and predation to dangerous increase, a devouring parasite, or formidable rival, is invariably fostered within its shadow. In good time there is war to the death.

In a doctor's office in Canada, I saw the picture of a bull-dog standing large against the background of the accepted flag, and beneath was this line:

"What we have, we'll hold."

I found that the picture had a national popularity. Yet a child stopping to think would have seen breakers ahead for a nation so lost in material things, as thus to challenge the Fates. . . . There is a fairy-tale of a man building a great boat for the air. It looked to win, and in the effrontery of achievement, he set forth to conquer God. Just then a hornet stung him.

It is a conviction held here that the darkest period of American materialism came to its end with the beginning of the war. The generation of literary producers in manifestation at that time was responsible for the bleakest products which

America will ever have the shame of showing to future generations.

It was not so devoid of genius as would appear; the first cause was the difficulty in getting the best work "through." This again was not because the public was not ready for the good, but because the public taste was brutalised by men who stood between the public and the producers. These middlemen insisted, by the right of more direct contact, that the public should have what they fancied the public desire to be.

I sat in Union Square recently with a beggar who studied me, because it appeared to be my whim to help him with a coin. Back of his temples was a great story—sumptuous drama and throbbing with the first importance of life. He did not tell me that story, and I could not draw it from him. Rather he told me the story that he fancied I would want. There was a whine in it. He chose to act, and he was not a good actor. His offering hurt, not because he was filthy and a failure, but because he lied to himself and to me, because he did not dare to be himself, though the facts were upon him, eye and brow and mouth. So I did not get his story, but I got a thrilling picture of the recent generation in American letters —I, being the public; the truth of his story representing the producer, and the miserable thing he fancied I was ready for, being the middleman's part.

All workmen of the last generation—all who would listen—were taught to bring forth their products with an intervening lie between the truth and their expression—the age of advertising heavy in all production.

I recall from those days what was to me a significant talk with an American novelist who wanted sales, who was willing to sacrifice all but the core of his character to get sales, and who found himself at that time in a challenging situation. As he expressed it:

"Along about page two hundred in the copy of the novel I am on, the woman's soul wakes up."

"A woman's novel?" I asked.

"Meant to be," said he. "Study of a woman all through. Begins as a little girl—different, you know—sensitive, does a whole lot of thinking that her family doesn't follow. Tries to tell 'em at first, but finds herself in bad. Then keeps quiet for years—putting on power and beauty in the good old way of bumps and misunderstanding. She's pure white fire presently—body and brain and something else asleep. She wants to be a mother, but the ghastly sordidness of the love stories of her sisters to this enactment, frightens her from men and marriage as the world conducts it——"

"I follow you," said I.

"Well, I'm not going to do the novel here for you," he added. "You wouldn't think there was

a ray of light in it from this kind of telling. A man who spends five months of his best hours of life in telling a story, can't do it over in ten minutes and drive a machine at the same time——"

"We're getting out of the crowd. What did the girl do?" I asked.

"Well, she wanted a little baby—was ready to die for it, but had her own ideas of what the Father should be. A million women—mostly having been married and failed, have thought the same thing here in America—pricked the unclean sham of the whole business. Moreover, they're the best women we've got. There are——"

He purposely shook the hat from his head—back into the seat—at this point.

"There are some young women coming up into maturity here in America—God bless 'em—who are almost brave enough to set out on the quest for the Father of the baby that haunts them to be born. . . . That's what she did. He was a young man doing his own kind of work—doctoring among the poor, let us say, mainly for nothing—killing himself among men and women and babies; living on next to nothing, but having a half-divine kind of madness to lift the world. . . . She saw him. You can picture that. They were two to make one—and a third. She knew. There was a gold light about his head which she saw—and some of the poverty-folk saw—but which he didn't

know the meaning of, and the world missed altogether.

"She went to him. It's cruel to put it in this way. . . . I'm not saying anything about the writing or about what happened, but the scene as it came to me was the finest thing I ever tried to put down. We always fall down in the handling, you know. . . . I did it the best I could. . . . No, I'm not going to tell you what happened. Only this: a little afterward—along about page two hundred of the copy—the woman's soul woke up."

"Why not, in God's name?" I asked.

He glanced quickly at me as a man does from ahead when his car is pressing the limit.

"Ever have a book fail?" he asked.

"Seven," said I.

He cleared his throat and the kindest smile came into his eyes:

"They tell me at my publishers' that I slowed up my last book badly—by taking a woman's soul out for an airing—just a little invalid kind of a soul, too. Souls don't wake up in American novels any more. You can't do much more in print nowadays than you can do on canvas—I mean *movie* canvas. You can paint *soul* but you can't photograph it—that's the point. The movies have put imagination to death. We have to compete. You can't see a soul without imagination—or some sort of madness—and the good people who want imag-

ination in their novels don't buy 'em. They rent or borrow. It's the crowds that go to the movies that have bright-coloured strings of American novels as the product runs—on their shelves—little shiny varnished shelves—red carpets—painted birds on the lamp-shades and callers in the evenings."

There was a good silence.

"Do you know," he added presently, "I've about come to the conclusion that a novel must play altogether on sensuous tissue to catch the crowd. Look at the big movie pictures—the actors make love like painted animals. . . . I'm not humorous or ironical. It's a big problem to me——"

"Why, you can't touch the hem of the garment of a real love story until you are off the sensuous," I offered. "The quest only begins there. I'm not averse to that. It belongs in part. We are sensuous beings—in part. But I am averse to letting it contain all. Why, the real glow comes to a romance when a woman's soul wakes up. There's a hotter fire than that which burns blood-red——"

"I know," he said quickly. "I know. That blood-red stuff is the cheapest thing in the world. . . . I'm sure of this story until her soul wakes up. She stirs in her sleep, and I see a giantess ahead—the kind of a woman who could whistle to me or to you—and we'd follow her out—dazed by the draw of her. They are in the world. I reckon souls do wake up—but I can feel the public

dropping off every page after two hundred—like chilled bees—dropping off page by page—and the old familiar battle ahead for me. I can feel that tight look of poverty about the eyes again——"

"Are you going to put her soul back to sleep?" I asked, as we turned again into the crowd.

I wasn't the least lordly in this question. I knew his struggle, and something of the market, too. I was thinking of tradesmen—how easy it is to be a tradesman; in fact, how difficult it is to be otherwise—when the very passion of the racial soul moves in the midst of trade.

"She's beautiful—even asleep," he said. "I'm afraid I'll have to give her something. I'm building a house. She's in the comprehension of the little varnished shelves—asleep."

"Doesn't a tight look come about the eyes—from much use of that sort of anæsthetic?" I asked.

"Let's get a drink," he answered.

19

THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

BUT the stroke of death has fallen upon such pandering, and the war put it there. The big names of the last generation are now magazine and movie men; all save the few whose sutures have not entirely closed, and they are making their last frenzied turn to meet the new social order, as they met the floating vogues and whims so long. But this is a difficult turn for panderers and caterers, because it does not have to do with the surface matter, nothing to do with dance and dress and appetite, but with the depths of the human spirit, quickened to animation afresh by the agony of the world.

Only the rarest few of the greatest names of England and Europe have escaped the fatal partisanship. They have become little national voices, and in the coming years this will be remembered against them bitterly. The truly liberated soul does not fall into lying attempts at national exoneration. The truly liberated soul is no longer a nationalist. A few of the young men have es-

caped this curse, but the older had their training, as has been told, in the blackest age of man. Men have been diminished in more spacious times than these by becoming laureates; they cannot but be degraded by becoming nationalists in these abandoned hours.

Genius, in the last generation, met a destructive force in the material world, almost as deadly and vindictive as that encountered by Copernicus. The voices of very few heralds were even heard, but there is a battle-line of genius in the new generation, timed for the great service years following the chaos of war. They will bring in the liberation of religion from mammon; they will bring in the religion of work, the equality of women, not on a mere suffrage matter alone, but in spirit and truth; they will bring in their children unaccursed.

. . . There's always a squeaking when a wagon climbs out of a rut, which is another way of saying that a time of transition is a time of pain.

This is a notable and constructive generation now beginning its work in America, and joining hands with the few remaining Undefiled of Europe. They are not advertisers, nor self-servers. They do not believe in intellect alone. Their genius is *intuitionally* driven, not intellectually. Just as steam has reached its final limitations as a force, and is being superseded by electricity (the

limitations of which have not yet been sensed so far even by the most audacious), so the intellect, as a producing medium, has had its period—a period of style-worship, vanities of speech and action, of self-service, of parading, of surface-show and short-sightedness, without parallel in the world.

For the intellect is a product of sunlight, its energy supplied by human blood, a temporal heat. Intuition is driven from the fountain-head of spiritual energy. Its great conception is the unity of all nature. The intellect is as old as your body is; the giant that is awakening from sleep in the breasts of the rising generation is immortal.

In all times, second-class artists have dealt in the form and matter of the age, talked of its effects and paraded its styles. Only the very greatest above them have realised that the true story of the thing, as any given man sees it, is the one important thing in the world for him to produce; that the nearness of the expression to the thought is the measure of his success; in a word, that his thought must be put into words (or tones or paint or stone) without an intervening lie from the medium.

The race of men and women in their twenties, now at work in America, are doing these things. Especially in the new poetry is the fine consummation apparent. These are the leaders of the new social order. Before the war, such as had developed a voice had to shout through shut doors. The war has beaten down the doors. A compar-

able race of young workmen (more men than women there; more women than men here) has appeared in Russia and raised its voice. It is not altogether a dream that a unifying span will stretch across the pillars raised by these two groups of builders.

In America this rising generation shall return to us the prestige which Whitman, Emerson, Thoreau and Lanier so superbly attracted. Indeed, Whitman is the master of the new poetry; his free verse lives in every line of the modern production, a point that would not be significant if it were alone of manner; but his broad human spirit, the infusing brotherhood which was his passion, and the same universal toleration, are the inspiring energies of the new workmanship.

What is the vision of this new social order?

These workmen recognise that no saint's blood, nor the power of any God, is going to interfere before a heavenly throne to save sinners who have wasted their lives in predatory accomplishment, instead of saving themselves;

That the re-distribution of the world's wealth will not bring about the new order and beauty of life; that the rich man is to be pitied as much as the poor (God knows that intrinsically he is to be pitied more, because his shell is thicker) that the time is at hand when the vulgarity of being rich in material wealth will be a sense of the common mind;

That women are not golden fleeces, nor clinging vines, but human adults with separate principles from men, which make them equally valuable in the social scheme; that women should be their own law in all matters of mating and reproduction, because the male has not the mental organism to cope authoritatively with these affairs;

That heretofore as educators, as fathers, mothers and bringers-forth of children, humankind, in the large, has shown itself less than the animals, inasmuch as it does not fulfil its possibilities as animals do;

That the time is past for cults and creeds, for separate interests and national boundaries, for patriotism and all the other *isms;* that we are all one in the basic meaning of existence; that there is an adjustment founded upon the principles of liberty and brotherhood, in which that which is good for the one is good for all; that this adjustment can only be attained by a reversal of the old form, personally and nationally—of thinking not of the self first in all things, but of the general good;

Finally, the new social order of workmen, having come up through the blear and sickness of lies, has arrived at the high vantage which reveals that there is nothing so potent as a straight statement of fact, nothing so strategically the masterstroke.

20

COMMON CLAY BRICK

CERTAIN Chapel days we require music instead of talk; other times only a walk will do, to the woods or shore according to the mood. One afternoon we walked up the shore where the beach is narrow and the bluffs high. A gleam of red in the sand became the theme of the day. It was just a half-brick partly submerged in sand, and momentarily in the wash of the waves. . . . It had a fine gleam —a vivid wet red against the gravel greys. Its edges were rounded by the grind of sand and water, and one thought of an ancient tile that might be seen in a Chinese rose garden.

. . . Just a common clay brick, not very old, not very hard, but a thing of beauty in the greys of the beach. It suggested a girl's dress I had once seen on a winter's day—a rough cloth of mixed grey wool with a narrow edging of red velvet around the sleeves and collar. . . . Yet, alone, and now that it was dry—this was just a brick-

red. It needed the grey grain. . . . I reflected that there must be a deep human reason for its appeal to our sense of beauty.

There was something in the hollowing and rounded edges, such as no machine or hand-grinding could duplicate, but that had to do with the age of the impression it gave. There is beauty in age, a fine mystery in itself. Often the objects which our immediate forebears found decorative strike our finer eyes as hideous, and with truth; but the more ancient things which simpler races found useful and lovely, often appeal to us as consummate in charm and grace, though we may never have seen them before in this life. The essence of their beauty now is a certain thrilling familiarity—the same mystery that awakens us in an occasional passing face, which we are positive has not met these eyes before.

We are all more or less sensitive to mystic relationships with old vases and coppers, with gourds and bamboo, urns and sandal-wood, with the scents and flavours of far countries and sudden stretches of coast, so that we repeat in wonder—"And this is the first time——" Something deep within knows better, perhaps. It is enough, however, to grant the profound meanings underlying our satisfaction in ancient objects, and that our sense of their beauty is not accidental.

For instance, there was something behind our pleasure in the gleam of red from the pervading

greys of the beach. . . . I pointed to the Other Shore—a pearly cloud overhanging the white of breakers at its point—and the little bay asleep in the hollow. The view was a fulfilment. That little headland breaks the force of the eastern gales for all this nearer stretch of shore, but its beauty is completed by the peace of the cove. The same idea is in the stone-work of the Chapel, and the completing vine.

Beauty is a globe of meaning. It is a union of two objects which complete each other and suggest a third—the union of two to make one. Our minds are satisfied with the sustaining, the masculine in the stone-work and the gaunt headland, because they are completed by the trailing vine and the sleeping cove. The suggestion in each is peace, the very quest of life.

There is always this trinity, to form a globe of beauty. From the union of matter and spirit, all life is quickened; and this initial formula of completing a circle, a trinity, pervades all life.

We are thrilled by the symbols of the great original affinity of matter and spirit, and the very life which we thrill with is its completing third.

Artists know this deeper than brain. We regarded the elm tree with its haggard weather-blackened limbs, and springing from it, the delicate green foliage. It was like the background of a great painting. I brought forth later some small reproductions of a number of famous paint-

ings. Among them, we found the stone and the vine often in the background, or the branch and the leaf, pictured usually with a suggestion of running water at the base, for action and progress and the ever-onward human spirit. We didn't find full-leafed trees there (for that would hide the lineaments of beauty, as the character of a face is concealed in fatness)—but branch and leaf, the need each of the other, and the promise of the fruit. It was the globe again—the union of the strong and the fragile for a finer dimension of power—bow and cord, ship and sail, man and woman, stalk and leaf, stone and vine—yes, and that which surprised me at the beginning—that gleam of red in the wash of water upon the greys. It was the suggestion of warmth and life brought to the cold, inanimate hues of sand and gravel, that gave us the sense of beauty in a wet, worn brick.

Firelight in a room is just the same thing—a grey stone fireplace with red embers is the very heart of a winter house. . . . If there had not been a vital significance back of our discovery of the day, our sense of a brick's beauty would have been untimely and disordered. . . .

Such were the points brought out as we walked. The episode is indicative of the days here. The best hours are always spontaneous. I am always occupied with my own affairs until the moment of Chapel, but Nature is invariably safe and re-

plete. There are a thousand analogies for every event of the human spirit, even for the resurrection of the human soul. The plan is one.

The day would have been poorly spent, no matter what I might say, without an expression from the others on the beauty conception. It is the union again of receiving and expressing that makes growth and character. They would not try to remember what I said. Memory is not the faculty I cared to cultivate. The endeavour here is from the spirit outward. I do not wish to fill their brains, but to inspire their souls to fill their own brains. All work is a training for the expression of the real self. We are infinitely greater than our brains. If I can arrive at the truth of any subject, I need have no worry about sleepy heads or Inertia. A disclosure of truth, and the process of it made clear, is the perfect awakener, for truth is the aliment of the soul. It is not what I say, but what a truth suggests to them, that determines the value of their expression of it.

Expression is the triumph. Every time the brain gives expression to the real self, there is a memorable vitality, not only in the expression, but strength and authority added to the brain itself. This is training for writers, but words are the natural implements for us all. . . . So the ardent aim of the classes here is to awaken the deeper vitalities of those who listen. When one

awakens a soul interest, you may rely upon it the brain is open to its full zest and capacity. Pattering of uncohered facts upon the temporal surface of the brain in the effort to lodge them in the tentacles of memory, does not construct the character of man or woman.

The superb flower of any educational work is the occasional disclosure of the real bent of a student. That is always like the discovery of eldorado. The most important fact to be considered in any educational ideal is that the soul of every one has its own especial treasures and bestowals; and when one succeeds in touching with fresh fire an ancient facility or proclivity in the breast of a boy or girl—the rest is but following the gleam. . . . The world finds us significant, even heroic, only in so far as we give expression to a power intrinsic.

Another day we found more water-worn bricks. An old brick house long ago had rubbed itself into the falling bank, and now its parts are spread along certain portions of the shore and buried in the sand. The boys brought in a half-bushel of this red treasure, and we set about constructing a narrow cement walk of quality. Our idea was to carry out and make perpetual the affinity of the red gleams as insets in a grey pebble walk.

We worked raptly, even through the hard, dull labour of levelling, setting the frames and laying

the concrete foundation. The finishing was the absorbing part. The idea was not for a fine-grained sand walk, but a mixture of all sizes from a penny large down to the finest sand. The cement makes the most lasting bond in a mixture of this kind; moreover, the pebbly finish was effective and darker for the insets.

The walk was less than two feet wide and roughly squared by pieces of shingle laid in the concrete, tip to tip. The final dressing, two inches of pebble mortar, looked unpromising on account of its coating of white. It would have hardened a dingy cement colour, instead of the deep, sparkling grey desired, had we not thought of turning a fine spray from the hose upon the newly trowelled surface to wash away the top cement. To make sure, the surface was then lightly sponged until the pebble-tops were absolutely without the clinging white. The water also erased the least mark of the trowel.

The red insets were now tamped in with the trowel-handle, the unique round edges appearing without a touch of stain. The rapidly hardening mortar was not packed about the brick pieces, but the natural edge of the grey preserved, as if they had been hurled in. They were placed without immediate regularity, but with relation to the walk in its length. . . . We regarded it afterward in the rain—all frames and shingles removed, the loam and humus of the rose-soil soft-

ening the border—the red rounded edges of the brick-insets gleaming out of the grey—a walk that seemed to have been there a thousand years, the red pieces seemingly worn by the bare feet of centuries. . . . It satisfied, and the thought, too, that those who helped to do the work could not be quite the same after that afternoon.

21

THE HIGHEST OF THE ARTS

ONE day at Chapel, neither the Abbot nor the Dakotan appeared. The Columbian had left us. I looked up to see two young girls and another there. One of the papers brought in that day was upon the joining of two rivers. Where they came together was a whirlpool, a tremendous vortex that hushed all surrounding Nature. In the lowlands that lay about the place of that mighty meeting, a deep verdure came, for the winds carried the spray from the vortex. Nature loved the sounds of that pouring together. From the whirlpool, where two met, one great river emerged, white-maned with rapids for a way—then broad and pure and still, so that only birds and poets could hear the harmony deep as life. From time to time it gave forth its tributaries, yet seemingly was undiminished. Always on, always one, carrying all, making all pure, through the silent places, past the great mountains—to the sea.

It was not until I had read of this mating of waters that I realised the slightly different conditions in the Chapel, the young men not being there.

. . . The strangest humility stole over me. It had become the life-theme—to bring a breath from the open splendour of the future to the matings of men and women. I have never been able to understand how anything can be expected of men, if women are not great. I have never been able to understand how men and women can take each other as a matter of course. Most of all, I have been unable to understand how women can accept the man-idea of things.

The great killing in Europe was brought about because women have accepted the man-idea of life. Women are in this sense immediately responsible for the war, because they have not been true to the limitless potentialities of their being. Still from the very hour when man realised his greater bodily strength, continual pressures have fallen upon woman to break her dream. The Hebrew Scriptures show best the processes that have been brought to bear upon women—from the establishment of the patriarchal idea to the final going down into Egypt.

It is in the nature of women to please men, but they have not been allowed through the centuries to please men in their own way. Man wanted to be pleased according to his idea—and women,

in accepting that, have prostituted themselves. Men have united with submissive women to bring forth children farther and farther from the dream. Man's idea is possession; that which is possessed is not free. Man's thought is to make woman conform to his ideas; and that which conforms, at once betrays the first law of the growth to greatness—that of being true to one's self.

The veil, the mouth-veil, the crippled foot, the harem, the barred lattice, the corset, the eunuch, the denial of education to women, the very text of the marriage-rites in all countries, are man's ideas of keeping woman for himself, from herself. The Orient is rotted with this conception.

Would you like to know where man's ideas—man's plan of Conception—is most utterly outraged? *In the coming of Messiahs.* The Josephs are mainly dangling. They are in the mere passage of events, having to do neither with heights nor depths.

One of the deepest human instincts of the male is that woman is a wanton. It breaks out still in the best of men, wherever the sex-principle overpowers the mind. This is well-covered ground. I would suggest only that the present horrible chaos of human affairs, while directly the fault of the absence of rational idealism in the world, has been brought about in reality by the man-pressure which for centuries has fallen upon the nature of woman. I hold it as one of

the miracles that great women still move among us; and that to-day in every movement and voice of women at large in the world, one perceives that the transition is on. . . .

The great love story can only be founded upon liberty. Bring the plan of serfdom to a woman's nature, and one of two things takes place within her—submission utterly or outwardly. The sons of the submissive are neither conquerors of self nor takers of cities. The outwardly submissive woman may inwardly contain and foster a great dream—indeed, the fruits of these dreams have come to be—but more often the heart is filled with secret hatreds. Sons of hatred may be sons of strength, but the fire they burn with is red and not white.

Once I expressed the conviction that if the right man talked to a roomful of young, unmarried women upon the great ideals of motherhood —and his words were wise and pure enough—that not one of the women in the room would bring forth the children afterward that would have come to them had they not been there to listen. I believe that many young women of the arriving generation are tremendously eager to listen, and to answer the dream. . . .

I looked in humility and great tenderness upon those pure feminine elements in the Chapel, awaiting as usual what I should ask or say. When I thought that some time they would be mothers,

it came with a rush of emotion—that I had neither words nor art, nor strength nor purity to make them see the almost divine possibilities of their future. For years I had written in the hope of lifting the ideals of such as these; dreamed of writing at last with such clarity and truth that they could not be the same after reading; but it is different writing to the great outer Abstraction, than talking face to face in one's Study. Some of the things said that day are written here without quotations:

. . . It is all soil and seed again. The world to-day has not entered the outer courts even of the physical beauty of romance. The lower the orders of human understanding, the easier it is for the young men and women to accept their mates. It is often a matter of propinquity—the handiest. The women of the lower classes do not bring an alabaster bowl to one certain spring of pure water. There seems to be a red enchantment upon the many—the nearest will do. The great loves of the world have not thus come to be. Great women, carrying the whitest fires, have waited for the One; they have listened for a certain voice. Their hearts knew. There was no chance. When they were ready, the One arrived.

The lovelier we become in conduct and the higher we turn in aspiration—the more beautifully are we prepared for the great services of Romance. As a race we have only touched our

lips to the cup of its beauty and fruitfulness. . . . Would you, who understand so well what culture has done for corn and roses, forget the mysteries of your own great being—rush blindly as the world does into the arms that first beckon, following the laws that have made you the most superb of animals, forgetting the laws that have made you living souls?

I would have you study the lineage of Mary, the wonderful care with which it was written, even to include that blent flame of earth and heaven which was Ruth; I would have you read again the stories of Gautama and Jesus, and of the mothers of the prophets. The stories of the coming of Messiahs are always the greatest stories in the world. . . . And then we see the great stony fields of humanity—the potential mass in which the great ones of the future are to rise. Their matings are makeshifts; their brief honeymoons are matters from which the finer world turns its eyes.

. . . For many days you have come in here quietly at this time, taking your seats together, and listening so cheerfully to what has passed. You know as well as I that there have been moments in which the stones of the Chapel walls faded from our eyes, and that which we saw in each other was not that which we see as we pass in colder moments in the street. We have had moments here when it seemed that any thought was

easily to be comprehended—that it had but to be spoken to be embraced. . . . There have been moments, too, sudden spontaneities when we were pure givers, when there was love in our hearts for all beings, and we were strong to answer any call.

It is not that which we pass coldly on the street that has gladdened me so often and so strangely in your coming—but those mysteries within, those arousings deeper than brain, that do away so peremptorily with all systems of teacher and student; which show us one in meaning and one in aim. . . . It is tragic that the romances of the world so seldom touch these high mysteries. We feel the Old Mother drawing us together—all her great blind forces for renewing her lands and seas and realms of air. But we forget that the animals follow this; the myriads of unawakened men and women follow this; the products of this are used for every waste and violence. Nature brings them in, and then destructive principles play upon them. They are dealt with in great numbers, because individuals have not emerged. They have slain them twenty thousand the day in Europe of late—the bodies of men whose mothers in the main have followed the blind forces of Nature, and no more. Nature will replenish these losses.

Perceive, too: The many have not even sensed the beauties of Nature. This physical being of

ours which the Old Mother has raised from the earth that a God might be built within it—even the beauty of this is not yet fulfilled—much less the powers of the mind which we have touched —much less that radiance of spirit which has made our highest moments together so memorable.

. . . You would be mothers—that is the highest of the arts. The making of books is childish and temporal compared to that. Mothering of men—that is the highest art. . . . Yet we do not make books blindly. For years we labour and watch the world; for years we gather together our thoughts and observations of men and Nature; studiously we travel and willingly at last we learn to suffer. Suffering brings it all home to us; suffering connects together all our treasures, so that we see their inter-relations and our meaning to them all. At last (and this, if we have been called in the beginning) we dare to write our book. It fails. Again and again we fail—that is the splendid unifying force, working upon us. So far, we have only brought into the world our half-gods. Failures melt us into the solution of the world. . . . We have learned to welcome suffering now; we have detached ourselves from the shams that the world can give. We have learned that the world cannot pay in kind for any noble action—that the spirit of human hearts alone can answer any great striving. . . . We go apart to the wildernesses to listen. In the sum-

mit of our strength, the voice begins to speak—the *Guru's* voice.

We are but instruments for the making of books. We are but listening surfaces for the voice to play upon. At last and at best, we have merely made ourselves fine enough to be used. Then our book is done. We have no part in it afterward. If we have done well, the world will serve it in God's good time. . . . And that is the low and the temporal art. Mere bodies of books come into the world in thousands. They move their little season and pass. Even the half-gods only rise and stir and pass away. But when the half-gods go, the Gods arrive.

. . . You would not do less than this to bring forth men—you who have the call. . . . You must learn the world—be well grounded in the world. You need not forget the Old Mother. Your feet are of clay—but you must have the immortal gleam in your eyes. Do not forget the Old Mother—yet it is only when the Father appears that you can see her as she really is. It is the light of His spirit that has shown you the passion of the rose, the goodness of the wheat, the holiness of the forests. By His quickening you are hushed in the beauty of the Mother. . . . The myriads of makers of books have not yet sensed this beauty.

There is a *different* love of Nature. We cry aloud in our surface ecstasies—that the Old

Mother was never so beautiful, her contours and colourings. We travel far for a certain vista, or journey alone as if making a pilgrimage to a certain nave of woodland where a loved hand has touched us. . . . But this lifted love of nature is different from the Pipes of Pan, from all sensuous beauty. The love of Nature that I mean is different even from wooings and winnings and all that beauteous bewilderment of sex-opposites—different from all save the immortal romances.

I wonder if I can suggest what is in the heart; it cannot be more than a suggestion, for these things have not to do with words. You who have felt it may know; and in those high moments you were very far from the weight and symbols of Nature, but very close to her quickening spirit. . . . I walked for hours alone, through different small communities of beech and oak and elm; and on a slope before my eyes there was a sudden low clearing of vapour, as if a curtain were lifted, and I saw a thicket of dogwood in the mystery of resurrection, the stone of the sepulchre rolled away.

I do not know to this day if they were really there. I have never found the trees again. . . . I was sitting here one fall night, a South Wind straight from the great water, and the mignonette came in and lingeringly passed. The garden was behind to the North. I went to it and it gave me nothing, moved around it, and there was no respi-

ration of the heaven-breath. Yet the oneness and the spirit of life had touched me from the miracle, like the ineffable presence of the dogwood in bloom on that fairy slope.

The love of Nature, the different love, is a matter of our own receptivity. If we are brave enough, or sweet enough within, we will not require the touch of the senses, nor Nature's masterstrokes to awaken us. We will not need to leave our rooms, for it is all here—in the deep gleam of polished strength of the hickory axe-handle, in the low light of the blade, in stone wall and oaken sill, in leather and brass and pottery, in the respiration of the burning wood, and veritably massed upon the sweeping distance from the window. It is because we are coarse and fibrous and confined in the sick weight of flesh that we do not stand in a kind of creative awe before the lowliest mystery of our physical sight.

Do you know that there is a different fragrance, a different manner of burning to each tree, whose parts you bring to the open camp fire or your own hearth; that some woods shriek at this second death after the cutting, that others pass with gracious calm, and still others give up their dearest reality, at the moment of breaking under the fire, like the released spirit of a saint that was articulate heretofore only in beautiful deeds?

The willow burns with quiet meagre warmth, like a lamb led to slaughter, but with innocence

feigned, keeping her vain secrets to the last. The oak resists, as he resists the axe, having spent all his energy in building a stout and perfect body, proud of his twisted arms and gnarled hands. The pine rebels, and noisily to the swift end, saying: "I do not believe in cremation. I believe in breaking down alone and apart, as I lived. I am clean without the fire. You should let me alone, and now I shall not let you think nor talk of real things until I am gone." . . . Each with its fragrance—the elm, the silentest and sweetest of all. The elm has forgotten her body in spreading her grace to the stars; the elm for aspiration, loving the starlight so well that she will not hide it from the ground; most beautiful of all, save the beech in winter, a swift and saintly passing of a noble life. The maple warms you in spite of herself, giving up her secrets which are not all clean—a lover of fatness, her shade too dense, a hater of winter, because she is bare, and the secret of all ugliness in her nudity. (The true tree-lover is never a stranger to the winter woods.)

And the mothering beech, with her soft incense, her heart filling the room with warmth and light, her will to warm the world; the mothering beech, a-healer and a shelterer, a lover like that Magdalen whose sin was loving much. She gives her body to Gods and men—and most sweetly to the fire, her passing naked and unashamed.

The different love of Nature that the child

knows instinctively; that young men and maidens forget in the heat of themselves—but that comes again to us if we grow decently older; in rock and thicket, in the voices of running water, in every recess of woodland and arch of shore—not the Pipes of Pan, but the mysteries of God, not sensuousness, but the awakening of a spirit that has slumbered—the illumination, sudden and splendid, *that all is One*—that Nature is the plane of manifestation for the infinite and perfect story of God; that Nature is the table which God has filled to overflowing—this is a suggestion, a beginning of the lifted love of Nature. . . .

If they beckon to you, the trees on the horizon (and God be with you if there are none); if they seem to be calling to you, do not fail them, do not wait too long. For surely that time will come when they will cease to call to your heart. They will not have changed, but you will have gone too far back among the spectres and illusions of detached things to know that they are calling. And be very sure you will never find the love of God in the eyes of passing men—if you have forgotten our Mother.

. . . Yet Nature alone is but the lowliest of the three caskets. I would not have you miss a breath of her beauty—but upon and within it, I would build the great dream of the coming of one from the Father's House. The Coming to

you. . . . Would you hesitate to make ready for that Guest? . . . The thousands come in and out and pass to the unprepared houses. They are mute—suffering is unspoken in their eyes. Even their faces and hands are unfinished. They leave no gift nor message. Nature who brought them does not spare them from the infinite causes of death.

. . . Would you hesitate to go into the wilderness to meet such a Guest? . . . But you will not hear the call to the wilderness unless your heart is listening—unless your limbs are mighty for the Quest—the little things of life silenced, the passions of the self put away.

There is beauty in the wilderness—the beauty of the Old Mother is there in the stillness. . . . Would you not go up into the hills for your great passion? Would you not lift your arms for the highest; would you not integrate the fire of martyrdoms in your breast, that you may not be destroyed by the lustre of that which descends to you? Would you be a potter's vessel to contain the murky floods of the lowlands—when you may became an alabaster bowl held to the source of all purity and power?

Do you know that a woman with a dream in her eyes may hold forth her arms and command heaven as no man, as no mere artist, can do? Do you know that her arms shall be filled with glory, according to her dream?

Did I say that you must go into the wilderness alone? . . . There is one to add his call to yours. There is the other half of your circle. He seldom comes first. Pan comes first to test you. By the very spirit that gives you the different love of Nature, you shall know your Lord when he comes. He is searching, too. Perhaps you shall know him by the Quest in his eyes. He, too, is looking for the white presences. . . . You must know the world—so that you may not be bewildered. You must not be caught in the brown study of Pan.

This earthy one is very subtle. He will try to take you first. He will try to rub the dreaming and the Quest from your eyes. He will stand between you and the white presences yonder in the hills. Sometimes he is very near to those who try to be simple. There are many who call him a God still. You must never forget that bad curve of him below the shoulders. Forever, the artists lying to themselves have tried to cover that bad curve of Pan as it sweeps down into the haunches of a goat. Pan is the first devil you meet when you reach that rectitude of heart which dares to be mother of souls.

Whole races of artists have lied about Pan, because they listened to the haunting music of his pipes. It calls sweetly, but does not satisfy. How many Pan has called and left them sitting among the rocks with mindless eyes and hands

that fiddle with emptiness! . . . Pan is so sad and level-eyed. He does not explain. He does not promise—too wise for that. He lures and enchants. He makes you pity him with a pity, that is red as the lusts of the flesh.

You may come to know that red in the breast. It is the red that drives away the dream of peace. . . . Yet the pity of him deludes you. You look again and again, and the curve of his back does not break the dream as before. You think that because you pity him, you cannot fall; and all the pull of the ground tells you that your *very thought of falling* is a breath from the old shames —your dead, but as yet unburied heritage, from generations that learned the lie to self.

You touch the hair of the goat, and say it is Nature. But Pan is not Nature—a hybrid, half of man's making, rather. Your eyes fall to the cloven hoof, but return to the level, steady gaze, smiling with such soft sadness that your heart quickens for him, and you listen, as he says: "All Gods have animal bodies and cloven hoofs, but I alone have dared to reveal mine." . . . "How brave you are!" your heart answers, and the throb of him bewilders you with passion. . . . You who are so high must fall far, when you let go.

. . . And many of your generation shall want to fall. Pan has come to you because you *dare*. . . . You have murdered the old shames, you have torn down the ancient and mouldering churches.

You do not require the blood, the thorn, the spikes, but I wonder if even you of a glorious generation, do not still require the Cross? . . . It is because you see so surely and are level-eyed, that Pan is back in the world for you; and it is very strange but true that you must first meet Pan and pass him by, before you can enter into the woodlands with that valid lord of Nature, whose back is a challenge to aspiration, and whose feet are of the purity of the saints.

. . . He is there, or it may be, if you are not through with the world, he is waiting in the wilderness. You must learn the hardest of all lessons—to wait. You must pass by all others who are not true to the dream. You must integrate your ideal of him—as you dream of the Shining One who will become the third of the Trinity. He must be true to the laws of beauty that the Old Mother has shown you. If he is less than the dream, pass on—for though you travel together for years, at the end you will look into the eyes of a stranger. . . . They are for those who have no dreams—the dalliances that dull our senses, the Arrivals for whom another is waiting.

. . . Perhaps in that solitary place, you turn to find him beside you. There is a hush upon the world as you meet his eyes. . . . The wilderness is bursting into verdure and singing. . . . He will not lure you to the low earth; he will love you best when your arms turn upward in aspiration.

. . . A whirlpool, a vortex—this is but the beginning of ecstasy.

This is your hour. The flame that glows upon your mighty mating is from the future. The woman is a love-instrument now, played upon by creative light. This is the highest mystery of Nature—all hitherto is background for this hour. The flight of the bee-queens, the lifting of wings through all the woodland festivals, the turning of comets back to the sun—such are but symbols. In the distance loom the mountains—and beyond them is the ocean of time and space.

22

MIRACLES

FROM within and without for many months, promptings have come to me on the subject of Order, which mystics denote as the most excellent thing in the Universe. . . . I remember once emerging from a zone of war in Asia to enter a city untouched by it. The order in that city was to me like the subsiding of a fever. The most terrible picture of disorder that the world can show is a battlefield of human beings.

Order has to do with peace of mind; disorder everywhere is a waste of force. In a purely mental sense, the cultivation of Order begins to appear essential to the worker, as he approaches the height of his powers and realises that there is so much to do, and that life here is both brief and precarious. Order, however, is larger than a mere mental matter. Its abiding-place is in the lasting fabric of man and nature. Evolution in its largest sense is the bringing of Order out of Chaos. The word *Cosmos* means order, as stated once before.

One descends into the terrors of disorder, financial and otherwise, in building his house. When I look back to the conditions that existed on this bit of Lake-front three years ago—the frog-hollows, tiling, the wasting bluffs, excavation, thirty-five cords of boulders unloaded perversely—the mere enumeration chafes like grit upon surfaces still sore. . . . I have sadly neglected the study of house-building in this book. It would not do now. The fact is, I don't know how to build a house, but one learns much that one didn't know about men and money. I sat here in the main, working with my back to the building. At times the approach of a contractor upon the Study-walk gave me a panic like a hangman's step; often again as he discussed the weather, all phases and possibilities, reviewing the past season, before telling what he came for, I boiled over like a small pot, but noiselessly for the most part. With penetrative eye, distant but careful observations, I would refer him to the dream which the architect had drawn. . . . When the different contractors came a last time with bills, I would take the accounts and look studiously into a little book, holding it severely to the light. After much conning, I would announce that my accounts tallied with theirs in the main. And when they had departed, finished and paid with another man's money,—standing alone, tormented with the thought of how

little money really can pay for, I wanted to rush after them and thank them for going away.

In the evening, when the last workman was gone, I used to venture into the piling structure. The chaos of it would often bring a fever around the eyes, like that which a man wakes with, after a short and violent night. Then on those evenings when something seemed accomplished that gave a line to the blessed silence of the finished thing, and I found myself turning in pleasure to it—the thought would come that it wasn't really mine; that after all the detail remained of paying for it. I used to go from the building and grounds then—cutting myself clear from it, as a man would snip with scissors the threads of some net that entangled him. I don't breathe freely even now in the meshes of possession.

I used to wonder at the confidence and delight which the other members of the household took in the completing house. They regarded it as the future home. . . . One by one the different sets of workmen came and went. I am in awe of men who plaster houses for a living—and for pennies the hour. Always they arrive at the very summit of disorganisation—one house after another through life—to accept money and call their work paid for. . . . There is something to play with in masonry—every stone is different—but to learn order by lathing and plastering! Dante missed it

from his inventions. I do not count the plasterers paid—nor the house paid for. . . .

One evening I went through the structure when all but the final finishing was over. I saw it all and was in a daze. The town regarded it as having to do with me; the establishment was connected with my name; yet I stood in a daze, regarding the pool and the balcony and the fireplaces—finding them good. . . . The lumberman had outlined a plan by which the years would automatically restore me to my own, but I am unable still to see how these things are done. I would go to any length to help him in ways familiar to me, but I could never stake him to a stone house. And that was not all. I didn't look for the bit of Lake shore bluff. I merely chose it to smoke on, because it was still—and presently they called it mine. I didn't look for the architect, yet what he did, his voice and letters full of unvarying pleasure, I could never hope to do for him. . . . Yet here was the stone house—a week or two more from this night of the dazed inspection, we were supposed to move in.

The old Spanish house in Luzon was quite as real to me. It was in that verdant and shadowy interior that I first saw the tropical heart of a human habitation. But there was no wired glass; its roof was the sky. I remember the stars, the palms and the running water. A woman stood there by the fountain one night—mantilla, dark

eyes and falling water. It was there in the palm-foliage that I plighted my troth to the *patio*. . . .

And here was its northern replica—sunken area paved with gold-brown brick, the gurgle of water among the stones. Some one said that you could see right through from the road to the Lake, through the rear and front doors. I wanted it so—a house to see through like an honest face. Some one said that the whole house could be lit by firelight. I wanted it so.

"When we move in——" one of the children began.

I shivered. . . . But of one thing I was certain. If the lumberman didn't move in, we would. . . .

A certain Order came out of it all. A man should build something beside his house, while he is at it. That something should enable him to build another (if he ever *had* to do it again) without raising his voice; without losing his faith in men; without binding himself to the place or the structure by any cords that would hurt more than a day or two if they were cut. . . . The house is a home. It wasn't the lumberman who moved in. The rooms are warm with firelight at this moment . . . and yet with my back still turned upon it and the grinding and rending of chaos ended, I arise to remark with calmness and cheer that I would rent for indefinite generations rather than build again.

There is the order of the small man—a baneful thing in its way, sometimes a terrible and tragic thing. The narrow-templed Order which has destroyed our forests to make places for rows of sugar-beets. Then there is the order of Commerce which in multiplying and handling duplicates of manufacture, has found Order an economical necessity. Let that be confined to its own word, Efficiency.

The true individual rebels against the narrow-templed Order, rushes to the other extreme; and we observe a laughable phenomenon—the eccentricities of genius. In truth these eccentricities merely betoken the chaos of the larger calibre. Order in the case of the genius is a superb result, because of the broader surfaces brought under cultivation. "The growth of the human spirit is from simplicity to complication, and up to simplicity again, each circle in a nobler dimension of progress. There is the simplicity of the peasant and the simplicity of the seer. Between these two lie all the confusion and alarm of life, a passage of disorder, well designated Self-consciousness." *

Cleanliness of the body is said to be one of the first rules for the following of a certain religious plan of life. This is not the case exactly; rather one of the first things that occur to a man on the road to sanctity is that he must keep his body clean; second, that he must keep his mind clean;

* From *Midstream.*

third, that he must begin to put his spiritual house in order. This is a basic principle of occultism. We must prove faithful in the small things, first.

I rode over to a little cottage occupied by two young men who came here in the interests of writing careers. They had talent, soul, brain, balance, the unmistakable ignitions of the New Age. In a word, they were large-calibred men, whose business in life was to put in order a fine instrument for expression. Their cottage was not orderly. They did not seem to mind; in fact, they appeared to disdain such trifles. They were at the age when men may eat or drink anything and at all times without apparently disturbing the centres of energy. They were, in fact, doing large quantities of work every day—for boys. Yet daily in their work, I was finding the same litter and looseness of which their cottage was but an unmistakable suggestion. In fact, the place was a picture of their minds. . . . We are each given a certain area of possibility. Not one in a million human beings even roughly makes the most of it. The organisation of force and the will to use it must be accomplished in childhood and youth. This driving force is spiritual.

In this sense, all education is religion. Work is that, as well. It is man's interpretation, not the fault of the religion, that has set apart six days to toil in the earth and one day to worship God. A man worships God best in his work. His

work suffers if he misses worship one day in seven, to say nothing of six. I do not mean piety. A feeling of devoutness does not cover at all the sense I mean. A man's spirituality, as I would reckon it, has to do with the power he can bring into the world of matter from the great universe of spiritual force which is God, or the emanation of God, as all the great religions reverently agree.

I do not mean to bring cults or creeds or hymns or affirmations into the schools. This driving force which all the great workmen know and bow before, is above and beyond man-uttered interpretations, above all separateness, even above anything like a complete expression in matter as yet. One day the workman realises that he has fashioned something greater than himself—that he has said or sung or written or painted something that he did not know he knew, and that his few years of training in the world did not bring to him. He turns within to do it again. . . . I would have the children begin at once to turn within. In awe and humility, I beg you to believe that as a vast human family, we have but wet our ankles in an infinite ocean of potentiality designed for our use; that by giving ourselves to it we become at once significant and inimitable; that its expression *through us* cannot be exactly reproduced by any other instrument; and that if we fail to become instruments of it, the final harmony must lack our part, which no other can play.

That which we see by means of an optic nerve is but the stone, but the pit, of any object, a detached thing, which can be held in mind after the eye turns away, only by a sensible retaining of memory, as an object is held in the hand. There is a higher vision—and the word *imagination* expresses it almost as well as any other—by which the thing can be seen, not as a detached object, but in its relation to the whole.

There is a book on the table. You give it a day or a year. You find your utmost limitations expanded if it is great enough and you can give yourself freely enough. This book is no more a mere object upon a board. Its white lines are as long as the spires of magnetism which stretch up from the polar centre of the earth to the isolated northern stars.

You have read the book. Its separateness and detachment for you has ended. That which you held in your hand was but the pit, the stone. . . . You can read the whole story of the tree in the pit; the whole story of creation in any stone. The same magnetism that rises in spires from the poles of the earth and is seen by the optic nerve under certain conditions of atmosphere, rises from your brow, pours forth from the finger-ends of man. The actual skull of a human mind is but the centre of a flame of force, as seen by the truer vision, and the colour and the beauty of it is determined

by its instrumentation of the driving energy which gives life to all men and things.

Every object and every man tells the same story with its different texture, with its own tongue. One plan is written in every atom, woven in and through and around us in a veritable robe of glory. . . . The farther a man goes in vision, the more he sees that the plan is for joy; that the plan is one; that separateness and self-sense is illusion and pain; that one story is written in every stone and leaf and star and heart—the one great love story of the universe.

Miracles? They are everywhere; every day to one who enters upon the higher vision. I heard a young man speak for an hour recently—rising to superb rhythm, his voice modulated, his mind constructive and inspired. Three years ago he was inarticulate. No process of intellectual training could have brought him even the beginnings of mastery in this period—or in thirty years. He had listened until he was full, and then had spoken.

Miracles every day here. I am sometimes in awe of these young beings who show me such wisdom, in years when the human child is supposed to be callow and fatuous, his voice even a distraction. . . . It is only that they have come to see the illusion of detached things; to relate and cohere all together by the use of the power that seeks to flood through them. I am in awe

before them many times. The child that can see fairies in wood and water and stone shall see so very soon the Ineffable Seven and the downcast immortals in the eyes of friends and strangers.

23

MORE ABOUT ORDER

THE Order of the narrow-templed men is not to be criticised in itself. In fact it must be accomplished before the fresh complications and the resulting larger dimensions of faculty may be entered upon. The error lies in the hardening of the perceptions of children, through the existing methods of purely mental training; and in the manner of adult life, wherein the one imperious aim is dollar-making.

The men employed in the building here worked ten hours the day. No man lives who can do a thing well for ten hours a day as a habit. The last two or three hours of such a working-day is but a prolongation of strain and hunger. Here is a little town full of old young men. There is no help for him who "soldiers," since that is the hardest work. If you look at the faces of a half-hundred men engaged upon any labour, you will observe that the tiredest faces belong to those of the structurally inert—the ones who have to sur-

mount themselves as well as their tasks, and who cannot forget themselves in their activity.

In many of the modern mills, they called it a fine thing when the labour hours were shortened from ten to eight. As I see it, the man who is allowed to do the same thing every second or two for eight hours presents a picture of the purest tragedy.

Two of the primary causes of human misery are competitive education of children and the endless multiplication of articles of trade by mechanical means. Of the first only a thought or two need be added. I have suggested the spirit of the Chapel, in its upholding of the one whom I undertook lightly to reprimand for repeating a technical error. All the others sustained him and waited almost breathlessly for me to cease, so that I suddenly found myself out of order with one entity, as it were.

The big plan of unity and brotherhood has been enunciated again and again—from the tub of Diogenes, from Socrates and his golden-haired disciple; from that superb slave, Epictetus, whose spirit has since been a tonic for all races of men; from the deep-hearted emperor Aurelius—and even before these, whom we have the temerity to call Pagans. Then the Master Jesus came down, and left the story told more clearly and perfectly than any.

A loaf of bread may be leavened by yeast over

night, but it requires thousands of years to leaven a planet with a new spirtual power. We look at the world just now and are inclined to say that it is at its worst. In truth, this is the hour before daybreak. In every land men are watching the East. Already some have cried out at the false dawns; and in their misery afterward have turned back hopelessly to the strife—immersed themselves again in the long night of war.

But the causes of war are still operative in our midst, and they are more terrible than trenches in Flanders, because their effects must still be reckoned with after the madmen of Europe have found their rest. The idea of Brotherhood has been brooding over the planet for thousands of years. It tells us that all life is one; that we do the best unto ourselves by turning outward our best to others, and that which is good for the many is good for the one; that harmony and beauty and peace is in the plan if we turn outward from self to service.

Yet behold the millions of children taught at this hour on a competitive plan that reverses every idealism and shocks every impulse toward unity. I would count a desperate evil (one to be eradicated if possible by heroic measure) the first competitive thought that insinuated itself in the minds of those who come to the Chapel. Yet you and I have suffered this for years and years in our bringing up; and the millions behind us—every

day, every hour, in every class, they are stimulated by this baneful energy out of the descent of man. Thus we are still making wars. The child goes forth established in the immorality of taking what he can and giving only what he must—against every call, every fragrance, every flash of light from the new social order and the dream that shall bring us nearer home as a race.

Again as adults we are slaves to the ruin of mechanically multiplied things. On every hand, we are stimulated to believe that our worth is in material posessions; school and press and platform inciting us to the lie that we prosper by adding *things* unto ourselves. . . . A certain automobile factory decides to build one hundred thousand machines within a year. It is almost like a cataclysm when one begins to consider the maiming of the human spirit which follows in the wake of such a commercial determination. Mortgages, the impulse to stretch the means, the binding slavery to matter to pay, the rivalry of neighbours, actual lapses of integrity, the lie, the theft, the desire, the spoliation of children, the lowered vibration of the house, the worry, the fear—to say nothing of the ten thousand factory workers, each of whom has built nothing.

There are men in that great mound of mills who have merely used a foot, or a wrist, or an eye. Some of these good mechanics hold a file, others screw bolts, for eight hours; the many serve steel

to the machines and pluck it forth—eight hours each day. Fifty men of the ten thousand have a concept of the finished task; the rest have but a blind piece to do again and again, until their Order is madness, and all the faculties of the human will are rendered automatic for money, as if any form of wages could pay for these hells of routine.

Each man's sense of origins, his faculties won from Nature, his individuality and dispensations of human spirit, all are deadened. And for this men are said to be paid in dollars; the mill is said to be a marvel for efficiency.

The mercantile directorate that gathers every four days, to clip a wage here and stretch a margin there, is innocent; the man who knocks down another for his purse is but an erring, short-sighted child; the hordes who weaken themselves in waste and indulgence are clean-hearted, since they play fast and loose with what is in a sense their own property—but the efficiency system which uses men this way, is a slayer of more than mind and body. It commits the psychological crime.

A man who has nothing but money to give is bound to be vulgar; and he is never so vulgar as when he thinks he can pay in money for a fine task well done. The man who does an excellent bit of production from his own centres of being, puts his enduring self in it—a self said to be fashioned not

of clay. I repeat his work can only be paid for in kind. You cannot buy any bit of fine spirit with money, no gift of love or friendship, no turning toward you of any creative force. That which goes to you for a price, is of the dimension of the price—matter yields unto you matter. You can only purchase a fine instrument, or a fine horse, or the love of woman or child, by presenting a surface that answers. You possess them in so far as you liberate their secrets of expression.

I moved with a rich man about an estate which he had bought—and he didn't know the dogwood from the beech. I doubt if he saw anything but bark and green, shade and sun—a kind of twilight curtain dropped before his eyes. There was a low hill with a mass of stones grouped on top.

"I shall have those taken away," he said idly.

"Why?"

"Why, they're just stones——"

I didn't answer. . . . He wouldn't have believed me, nor possibly his landscape gardener. He couldn't see through the twilight curtain the bleach or the tan of the rock pile, its natural balance—that it was a challenge to a painter. The place would be all hedged and efficient presently. He spoiled everything; yet he would have known how to deal with you had you brought to him a commercial transaction—the rest of his surfaces were covered in a thick, leathery coat, very valuable in a septic-tank where air and light must be

excluded. . . . This man had another country estate in the East and still another in the South. I would point out merely that he did not truly own them.

Rather it would seem that one must spend years to be worthy of communion with one hillside of dogwood. According to what you can receive of any beauty, is the measure of your worthiness.

I remember my first adventure with a player-piano. I was conscious of two distinct emotions —the first a wearing tension lest some one should come to interrupt, and the second that I did not deserve this, that I had not earned it. . . . The instrument had that excellence of the finely evolved things. It seemed to me that the workmen had done something that money should not be able to buy. One does not buy such voices and genius for the assembly of tones. It seemed to me that I should have spent years of study to be worthy of this. There is a difference, as deep as life, in the listening and in the doing. Something of the plan of it all, is in that difference. I found that the spirit I brought was more designed to be worthy of this happiness, than any money could be. I found that a man does not do real work for money. That which he takes for his labour is but the incident of bread and hire, but the real thing he puts into a fine task, must be given. One after another, for many decades, workmen had given their best to perfect this thing

that charmed me. Every part from Bach's scale to the pneumatic boxes in the making of a piano and player had been drawn from the spirit of things by men who made themselves ready to receive. They had toiled until they were fine; then they received.

It was something the same as one feels when he has learned to read; when the first messages come home to him from black and white, and he realises that all the world's great literature is open to his hand. Again the great things are gifts. You cannot pay in matter for a spiritual thing; you can only pay in kind. I saw that the brutalisation of the player-piano resulted from people who thought they had earned the whole right, because they paid a price; that they did not bring the awe and reverence to their interpretations, and therefore they got nothing but jingle and tinkle and din.

I didn't know the buttons and levers, but I had an idea how a certain slow movement should sound, if decently played. In two hours the instrument gradually fitted itself to this conception. It was ready in every detail; only I was to blame for the failures. The excitement and exultation is difficult to tell, as I entered deeper and deeper into the genius of the machine. It answered, not in *tempo* and volume alone, but in the pedal relaxations and throbs of force. I thought of the young musicians who had laboured half their lives to bring to concert pitch the *Waldstein* or the *Em-*

peror, and that I had now merely to punctuate and read forth with love and understanding. . . .

A word further on the subject of disposing of one hundred thousand motor cars in a year. You will say there was a market for them. That is not true. There is not a natural market for one-fourth of the manufactured objects in the world. A market was created for these motor-cars by methods more original and gripping than ever went into the making of the motor or the assembly of its parts. The herd-instinct of men was played upon. In this particular case I do not know what it cost to sell one hundred thousand cars; in any event it was likely less in proportion to the cost of the product than is usually spent in disposing of manufactured duplicates, because the methods were unique. . . . Foot and mouth and heart, America is diseased with this disposal end. More and more energy is taken from production and turned into packing and selling.

Manufactured duplicates destroy workmen, incite envy and covetousness, break down ideals of beauty, promote junk-heaps, enforce high prices through the cost of disposal, and destroy the appreciation and acceptance of the few fine things. These very statements are unprintable in newspapers and periodicals, because they touch the source of revenue for such productions, which is advertising.

You will say that people want these things, or

they would not buy. A people that gets what it wants is a stagnant people. We are stuffed and sated with inferior objects. The whole *art of life* is identified with our appreciations, not with our possessions. We look about our houses and find that which we bought last month unapproved by the current style. If we obey the herd-instinct (and there is an intensity of stimulation on every hand for us to obey) we must gather in the new, the cheap, the tawdry, obeying the tradesmen's promptings, not our true appreciations—in clothing, house-building and furnishing—following the heavy foot-prints of the advertising demon, a restless matter-mad race.

We have lost the gods within; we have forgotten the real producers, the real workmen; our houses are dens of the conglomerate, and God knows that implicates the status of our minds. William Morris is happily spared from witnessing the atrocities which trade has committed in his name, and the excellent beginning of taste and authority over matter inculcated by the spiritual integrity of Ruskin is yet far from becoming an incentive of the many.

There are men who would die to make others see the wonderful character-building of productive labour. Until the work is found for the man, or man rises to find his own; until the great impetus in our national life is toward the end of developing the intrinsic values of each child, and fitting

the task to it; so long as trade masters the many, and the minds of the majority are attracted toward the simple theorem of making cheap and forcing sales, or buying cheap and selling dear; so long as the child is competitively educated in great classes, and the pride of life is in possession of material things, instead of the eternal things—just so long will we have war and governmental stupidity, and all shames and misery for our portion.

24

THE FRESH EYE

LIVING in rows, conducting our movements and our apparel as nearly as possible in accordance with the hitch of the moment, singing the songs our neighbours sing—this is Order, but gregarian order. It is thus that we lose or postpone the achievement of the fresh eye, the sensitiveness to feel ourselves and the truth. We accept that which we are told as true and beautiful; we accept that which is accepted. In reality, each man's sense of beauty is a different treasure. He must have the spirit of pioneers to come into his own.

A few years ago I passed for a square or two along the main avenue of a large city—a sunny afternoon in early winter, as I remember, and the hour of promenade. Young women and girls were wearing reds of the most hideous shades—the reds of blood and lust and decadence.

"Those are the Balkan reds," I was told.

A bit of poison has lingered from that shaft.

I saw something about America that I have been unable to forget. The women and girls didn't know what they were doing. They had accepted Trade's offering of the season blindly. Trade had exploited the reds, because the word Balkans was in the air that Fall, on account of an extra vicious efflorescence of the fighting disease. American mothers had allowed their children to ape barbarities of colour which are adjusted exactly to those sinking and horror-bound peoples—bloody as the Balkans—because Trade had brought them in.

These reds meant that the American multitude was unaware that certain colours are bad as hell. Trade will always lead a people astray. The eye that wants something from you, cannot lead you into beauty, does not know beauty. . . . Moreover, we are led downward in taste by such short steps that often we forget where we have landed. . . . I was sitting in a street-car just recently, near the rear door where the conductor stood. I had admired his quiet handling of many small affairs, and the courtesy with which he managed his part. When I saw the mild virtue and decency of his face and head and ears, I wondered afresh that he should be there.

He did the same thing each day, like a child compelled to remain at a certain small table to turn over again and again a limited and unvarying set of objects. There were but a few people in the car. I turned forward to the shoulders of the

motorman; and from his figure my mind wandered to the myriads of men like him, somehow opening and shutting valves upon the *juice* and upon the passing force of steam—through tunnels and trestles at this moment—driving trains and cars and ships around the world.

It was all a learning of Order, an integration of Order; and yet this motorman was held in rigid bands of steel, making the same unswerving passage up and down the same streets, possibly a score of times each day—his lessons of Order having long since lost their meaning; his faculties narrowing as fingers tighten, lest Order break into chaos again. And I wondered what a true teacher might have done for this motorman as a child, to make the best and most of his forces. The average child can be made into an extraordinary man. In some day, not too far, it will be the first business of the Fatherland to open the roads of production to those who are ready.

Now I was back with the conductor; found myself attentively regarding his trousers.

They were of heavy wool and blue, doubtless as clean as the usual every-day woollen wear of men. . . . Here is a peculiar thing: If we wear white clothing for a day or two, an unmistakable soil attaches, so that change is enforced. And yet, since there is no cry of Scandal across the more civilised zones of earth, the many wear the same woollen outer clothing winter and summer for

months at a stretch. One must accept this conclusion: It is not that we object to dirt, but that we do not want the dirt obvious. The garment that holds dirt may be worn until its threads break down, but the garment that shows dirt must be washed.

. . . They were heavy wool and blue. It was not the fabric alone, but the cut that held my eye. They were shaped somehow like a wide *W* that a child might bend with stiff wire, a letter made to stand alone. I suppose some firm makes them in great quantities for motormen and conductors. Had we not been led by easy grades to the acceptance, these things would have cried out for our eyes. Nowhere in the Orient or the Islands, is the male form made so monstrous. Had some one drawn them for us, in a place where we are accustomed to look for caricature; had we seen them in comic opera, or upon the legs of a Pacific Islander; or had we come from another planet, there would have been no mistake as to the debauchery of taste they represented. Over all, was a sadness that this good man should be shamed so.

And when one thinks of what women have done in obedience to the tradesman's instincts in late years; narrowing their waists one season, widening their hips or accentuating the bust another, loosening the abdomen as from a tightened stem the next—these are the real obscenities which we perform in the shelter of the herd. Exposure is frank

and clean-hearted compared to these manifestations of human beings; so that one with the beginnings of fresher vision cries out, "If I do not know, if I have not taste and cannot see truly, at least let me do as others do not." . . . And again the heaviness of it all lies in the bringing up of children *not to revolt.*

I talked of these matters to the Chapel group. Once I had seen a tall man, who was going away, look down into the eyes of a little boy he loved, saying: "Never do anything in secret that you wouldn't do before your best friend. The fact is, the only way you can ever be *alone* is to be beneath yourself." I remembered that as something very wise and warm.

It came to me, as I talked, that what we love best in children is their freshness of eye. We repeat their sayings with pleasure because they see things without the world-training; they see objects in many cases as they are. It was but a step then to the fact that the artist or worker who brings up anything worthy, has done just this—reproduced the thing more nearly as it is, because of a natural freshness of vision, or because he has won back to himself through years of labour, the absolute need of relying upon what his own senses and his own spirit bring him. It was this reliance that I was endeavouring to inculcate in every day's work in the Chapel.

Again and again the children have made me see the dissolving of character which comes from all forms of acting, even the primary defect of the novel as a vehicle, and the inevitable breaking down in good time of every artificial form of expression. It is true now, that an important message can be carried to the many more effectively in a play or a novel than through the straight white expression of its truth. This is so because the many have been pandered to so long by artificial settings and colourings, that the pure spirit of truth—*white* because it contains all colour—is not dominant and flaring enough for the wearied and plethoric eye.

We say that character-drawing in fiction, for instance, is an art. A writer holds a certain picture of a man or woman in his brain, as the story containing this character develops. In drawing a low character, the mind must be altered and deformed for its expression. In a book of fiction of a dozen different characters, the productive energy passes through a dozen different matrices before finding expression. These forms lie in the mind, during the progress of the novel; and since our own characters are formed of the straight expression of the thought as it appears in the brain, one does not need to impress the conclusion that we are being false to ourselves in the part of fictionists, no matter how consummate we become as artists.

It is an old story how the daughter of Dickens sat forgotten in his study, while he was at work upon some atrocious character of the under London world, possibly Quilp; how the great caricaturist left his desk for a mirror, and standing there went through the most extraordinary grimaces and contortions, fixing the character firmly in his mind for a more perfect expression in words.

In this same regard, one of the most interesting and sorrowful of all observations is the character disintegration of those who take up the work of acting as a career. Yet fiction writing is but a subtler form of acting in words. The value of our books is in part the concision of character portrayal—the facility with which we are able to lose ourselves and be some one else. Often in earlier years, I have known delight when some one said, "You must *be* that person when you are writing about him." I would answer: "He comes clearer and clearer through a book and presently begins *to do himself*. After that one goes over the early part of the book during which the character is being learned, and corrects him in the light of the more nearly finished conception."

It was a betrayal of glibness, of lightly-founded character, a shiftiness which must pass.

The utterance of truth is not aided by passing through a brain that is cut like a hockey rink from the passage of many characters. The expression of truth preserves its great vitality by passing

in as near a straight line as possible from the source through the instrument. The instrument is always inferior. It is always somehow out of true, because it is human and temporal. It is not enhanced by human artifice, by actings, nor by identification with fictions. The law of all life tells us, and we do not need to be told if we stop to realise, that the spirit of man is integrated by truth in expression, that the more nearly the truth we speak, the more nearly we bring the human and temporal to a par with the immortal within us. Bringing the mind to interpret the immortal is the true life, the true education, the fruits of which are the love of men and serenity and growth. I once heard it said that Carlyle, Whitman, Thoreau, Emerson and such men could not be artists in the fiction sense—that their efforts were pathetic, when they tried to enflesh their literary efforts in story form.

This is true. Yet we do not count our greatest novelists and actors above them in the fine perspective of the years, for they were interpreters of the human spirit. They interpreted more and more, as the years mounted upon them, the human spirit as it played through their own minds, which steadily conformed more nearly to truth. The point of the whole matter is, that in learning to interpret the human spirit more and more directly, by actions in the world or written words apart, the mind draws increasingly deep from a source

that is inexhaustible, and its expression finally becomes so rich and direct and potent that acting and fictioning of any form is impossible.

Again, it is the straight expression of things as they find them, that charms us in the words of children and masters. The true education is to encourage such expression, to keep the passage between the mind and its centre of origins wide open for the forth-sending of the inimitable and the actual.

The young minds here are trained to realise that the biddings of their inner life are more interesting and reliable than any processes merely mental can possibly be. Unless their teacher fails, they will become more and more the expressionists of themselves. No matter what form their work takes in the world, the ideal is held that the dimension of the human spirit will be upon their work, and this alone makes the task of any man or woman singular and precious and of the elect.

I hear again, "But you will make them solitaries." . . . The solitary way is first—all the great companions have taken that way at first. Solitude—that is the atmosphere for the conception of every heroism. The aspirations of the solitary turn to God. Having heard the voice of God—then comes the turning back to men. . . . To be powerful in two worlds—that is the ideal. There is a time for nestlings—and a time for great migratory flights.

25

THE CHOICE OF THE MANY

A TEACHER said upon hearing the title of this book, that she supposed it had to do with the child in relation to the state or nation—a patriotic meaning. I was wrong in getting a sting from this, for one should not be ambiguous. The sting came because of a peculiar distaste for national integrations and boundaries of any kind between men. The new civilisation which the world is preparing for, and which the war seems divinely ordained to hasten to us, will have little to do with tightly bound and self-contained peoples. In fact, such nations furnish in themselves an explosive force for disruption. Little more than material vision is now required to perceive most of the nations of lower Europe gathered like crones about a fire hugging the heat to their knees, their spines touched with death.

The work in the Chapel is very far from partisanship, nationalism and the like. It has been

a true joy to watch the young minds grasp the larger conception. It is as if they were prepared for it—as if they had been waiting. Encouraged to look to their own origins for opinion and understanding; taught that what they find there is the right opinion and conception *for them*, they find it mainly out of accord with things as they are. They express the thing as they see it, and in this way build forms of thought for the actions of the future to pass through.

This is sheer realism. We have always called those who walked before us, the mystics, because the paths they tread are dim to our eyes and their distance far ahead. That which is the mystic pathway of one generation is the open highway of the next. No man ever felt the awakening of his spirit and bowed to its manifestation, who was not a mystic to the many or few about him, and always the children of his fellows come to understand him better than their fathers.

I say to them here: I do not expect common things from you. I expect significant things. I would have you become creatively significant as mothers and as writers and as men. The new civilisation awaits you—new thought, the new life, superb opportunities for ushering in an heroic age.

You are to attempt the impossible. Nothing of the temporal must hold you long or master you. Immortality is not something to be won; it

is here and now in the priceless present hour, this moving point that ever divides the past from the future. Practice daily to get out of the three-score-and-ten delusion, into the eternal scope of things, wherein the little troubles and the evils which so easily and continually beset, are put away. There is no order in the temporal, no serenity, no universality. You who are young can turn quickly. That which you suffer you have earned. If you take your suffering apart and search it, you will find the hidden beauty of it and the lesson. If you learn the lesson, you will not have to suffer this way again. Every day there is a lesson, every hour. The more you pass, the faster they come. One may live a life of growth in a year. That which is stagnant is dying; that which is static is dead.

There is no art in the temporal. You are not true workmen as slaves of the time. Three-score-and-ten—that is but an evening camp in a vast continental journey. Relate your seeming misfortunes not to the hour, but to the greater distances, and the pangs of them are instantly gone. Art—those who talk art in the temporal—have not begun to work. If they only would look back at those masters whose work they follow, whose lives they treasure, they would find that they revere men who lived beyond mere manifestations in a name, and lifted themselves out of the illusion of one life being all.

There is no philosophy in the temporal. That which we call reason and science changes like the coats and ties of men. Material science talks loud, its eyes empty, clutching at one restless comet and missing the universe. That thing known as *psychology* taught to-day in colleges will become even for your generation a curio, sacred only for the preservation of humour. No purpose that confines itself to matter can become a constructive effect, for matter breaks down, is continually changed into new forms.

Electric bulbs wear out and are changed, but the current does not change. The current lights them one after another of different sizes, as you put them on. The bulb is an instrument like the brain. You turn on the power, and there is light. You would not rely upon the passing machine, when you know the secret of its force. Matter is driven, flesh is driven, all that answers to the pull of the ground is driven and changed and broken down and reunited in ever refining forms. That in your heart—that sleeping one—is dynamic with all that you have been. Your brain knows only the one. Do not forget your native force, as an immortal being. You may be workers in magic.

Do not become bewildered by what the world calls good. The world does not know. Follow the world and in that hour when you have obeyed its dictates and learned its wants—its taste will

change and leave you nothing. That which the many have chosen is of the many. The voice of the many is not the voice of God—it is the voice of the temporal and its destiny is swift mutation.

Nothing greater than the many can come from the ballot of the many; that is so well learned that its few and startling exceptions but help us to see the bleakness of the blind choice of the crowd, which conducts us sometimes to war and invariably to commonness. The few great men who have touched the seats of the mighty in this or any country—have walked with God alone against the crowd—until they were given the power to master their way into authority.

The choice of the many in a political leader is not different from its choice of a book or a flower or a fabric. A low vibration is demanded.

26

THE ROSE CHAPTER

I REMEMBER the February day in Chapel when the winter first became irksome. It had settled down in mid-November and been steady and old-fashioned. The little girl opened the matter. Winter had become a tiresome lid upon her beloved Nature—a white lid that had been on quite long enough. She had not let us forget the open weather much, for her talk and her essays had to do with growing days invariably. . . . The Abbot began to talk of Spring. Spring had also appeared in his paper, though outside there was two feet of steely frost in the ground. . . . Memories of other Springs began to consume us that day. We talked of buds and bugs and woodland places—of the gardens we would make presently.

"When roses began to come out for me the first time," said the old man, "I sort of lost interest in the many flowers. I saw a rose-garden and little beside—vines, of course. I know men who fall

like this into the iris, the dahlia, the gladiolus and the peony. There are folks who will have salvia and petunias, and I know a man who has set out poppies in his front yard with unvarying resolution—oh, for many years. He knows just how to set them out, and abandonment is over for that place with the first hard frost in the Fall. There is one good thing about poppies. They do not lie to you. They are frankly bad—the single ones, dry and thin with their savage burning, their breath from some deep-concealed place of decay. The double poppies are more dreadful—born of evil thoughts, blackness blent with their reds. Petunias try to apear innocent, but the eye that regards them as the conclusion in decorative effect, has very far to come. Every man has the flower that fits him, and very often it is the badge of his place in human society.

"The morning-glory is sweeter natured and somewhat finer in colour than the petunia, but very greedy still. It does not appreciate good care. Plant it in rose soil and it will pour itself out in lush madness that forgets to bloom—like a servant that one spoils by treating as a human. Each flower tells its story as does a human face. One needs only to see deeply enough. The expression of inner fineness makes for beauty."

Which remarks were accepted without comment.

"Again," the old man added, "some of the ac-

cepted things are not so far along in beauty. Tulips are supposed to be such rejoicers. I can't see it. They are little circles, a bit unpleasant and conceited. If one were to explain on paper what a flower is like, to a man who had never seen anything but trees, he would draw a tulip. They are unevolved. There is raw green in the tulip yellows; the reds are like a fresh wound, and the whites are either leaden or clayey. . . . Violets are almost spiritual in their enticements. They have colour, texture, form, habit, and an exhalation that is like a love-potion—earthy things that ask so little, do so well apart and low among the shadows. They have come far like the bees and the martins. Lilacs are old in soul, too, and their fragrance is loved untellably by many mystics, though the green of their foliage is questionable. Nothing that is old within is complacent. Complacency goes with little orbits in men and all creatures."

"Cats are complacent," said the Abbot.

"Nasturtiums are really wonderful the more one lives with them," the voice of the Chapel went on. "They are not so old, but very pure. Their odour, in delicacy and earth-purity, is something that one cannot express his gratitude for—like the mignonette. Their colouring and form warms us unto dearer feelings. They seem fairer and brighter each year—not among the great things yet, but so tenderly and purely on the way. Then I may

betray a weakness of my own—and I am glad to—but I love the honeysuckle vine. Its green is good, its service eager, the white of its young blossome very pure and magically made. The yellow of its maturer flowers is faintly touched with a durable and winning brown like the Hillingdon rose, and its fragrance to me though very sweet has never cloyed through long association. Yet clover scent and many of the lilies and hyacinths and plants that flower in winter from tubers, can only be endured in my case from a distance."

"Soon he will get to his roses," said the little girl.

"Yes, I am just to that now. It has been an object of curiosity to me that people raise so many *just roses*. Here is a world by itself. There is a rose for every station in society. There are roses for beast and saint; roses for passion and renunciation; roses for temple and sanctuary, and roses to wear for one going down into Egypt. There are roses that grow as readily as morning-glories, and roses that are delicate as children of the Holy Spirit, requiring the love of the human heart to thrive upon, before sunlight and water. There is a rose for Laura, a rose for Beatrice, a rose for Francesca. . . . Do you know that one of the saddest things in the world, is that we have to hark back so far for the great romances? Here am I recalling the names of three women of long ago whose kisses made immortals of their mates, as

thousands of other writers have done who seek to gather a background out of the past against which to measure their romances.

"You will say that the romances of to-day are not told; that a man and woman of to-day keep the romance apart of their life from the world—of all things most sacred. You may discuss this point with eloquence and at length, but you are not on solid ground. A great romance cannot be veiled from the world, because of all properties that the world waits for, this is the most crying need. Great lovers must be first of all great men and women; and lofty love invariably finds expression, since greatness, both acknowledged and intrinsic, comes to be through expression. A great romance will out—through a child or a book or some mighty heroism. Its existence changes all things in its enviroment. One looks about the place of it and finds the reporters there. The highest deeds and utterances and works have come to man through the love of woman; their origins can be traced to a woman's house, to a woman's arms. A woman is the mother of a man's children, but the father of his actions in the world. He is but the instrument of bearing; it is her energy that quickens his conceiving. . . .

"Roses—how strangely they have had their part in the loves of men and women. Do you think that our Clovelly roses have come to be of themselves? Do you think that the actual *hurt* of

their beauty—the restless, nameless quest that comes spurring to our hearts from their silent leaning over the rim of a vase—is nothing more than a product of soil and sun? Has their great giving to human romances been dead as moonlight? Have roses taken nothing in return? . . . I would not insist before the world that the form and fragrance and texture of the rose has come to be from the magnetisms of lovers, but we of the Chapel may think as we will. That liberty is our first law. We may believe, if we like, that the swans of Bruges have taken something in return for their mystic influence upon the Belgian lovers at evening—something that makes a flock of flying swans one of the most thrilling spectacles in Nature.

". . . I was speaking of how curious it is that so many people who have reached roses—have ended their quest on the borders, at least that they linger so long. They raise red roses; they bring forth spicy June roses. In truth, the quest never ends. We do not stop at the Clovelly, which has so strangely gladdened our past summer. We pass from the red to the white to the pink roses—and then enter the garden of yellow roses, the search ever more passionate—until we begin to discover that which our hearts are searching for—not upon any plant but in ideal.

"The instant that we conceive the picture, earth and sun have set about producing the flower—as action invariably follows to fill the matrix of the

thought. At least we think so—as the universe is evolving to fulfil at last the full thought of God. . . .

"The quest never ends. From one plant to another the orchid-lover goes, until he hears at last of the queen of all orchids, named of the Holy Spirit, which has the image of a white dove set in a corolla as chaste as the morning star. An old Spanish priest of saintly piety tells him, and he sets out for the farthest continent to search. It was his listening, his search for the lesser beauty that brought him to the news of the higher. It is always so. We find our greater task in the performance of the lesser ones. . . . But roses—so many by-paths, because roses are the last and highest words in flowers, and the story they tell is so significant with meanings vital to ourselves and all Nature.

"First I want to divulge a theory of colour, beginning with the greens which are at the bottom. There are good greens—the green of young elms and birches and beeches. Green may be evil too, as the lower shades of yellow may be—and certain blends of green and yellow are baleful. The greens are first to appear. They are Nature's nearest emerging—the water-colours—the green of the water-courses and the lowlands. Nature brings forth first the green and then the sun does his part. Between the rose-gold and the green of a lichen, there seems to be something like ninety degrees

of evolution—the full quarter of the circle that is similarly expressed between the prone spine of the serpent and the erect spine of man.

"Reds are complementary to the greens and appear next, refining more or less in accord with the refinement of the texture upon which they are laid; a third refinement taking place, too, that of form. These improvements of value are not exactly concurrent. There are roses, for instance, to represent all stages—roses that are specialising in their present growth, one might say, in form *or* colour *or* texture; but in the longer line of growth, the refinement is general. We look from our window at the Other Shore and a similar analogy is there. From this distance it seems but one grand sweep to the point of the breakers, but when we walk along the beach, we are often lost to the main curve in little indentations, which correspond to the minor specialisations of evolving things. It is the same in man's case. We first build a body, then a mind, then a soul—and growth in the dimension of soul unifies and beautifies the entire fabric. All Nature reveals to those who see—that the plan is one. . . .

"The first roses were doubtless of a watery red. Their colour evolved according to association of the particular plants, some into the deeper reds, others paling to the white. It was the latter that fell into the path of truer progress. Reaching white, with a greatly refined texture, the sun began

to paint a new beauty upon them—not the pink that is a diluted red, but the colouring of sunlight upon the lustre of a pearl. The first reds were built upon the greens; this new pink was laid upon a white base.

"The story is the same through all evolving things. Growth is a spiral. We return to the same point but upon a higher level. Our ascent is steadily upward—always over hills and valleys, so to speak, but our valleys always higher above the level of the sea. So that the white is a transition—an erasure of the old to prepare for the finer colouring.

"And now comes the blend of the maiden pink and the sunlight gold. The greens and the reds are gone entirely. Mother Earth brings up the rose with its virgin purity of tint, and the sun plays its gold upon it. There are pink and yellow roses to show all the processes of this particular scope of progress; some still too much pink, other roses have fallen by the way into lemon and ochre and sienna; there are roses that have reverted to the reds again; roses that have been caught in a sort of fleshly lust and have piled on petals upon petals as the Holland maidens pile on petticoats, losing themselves to form and texture and colour, for the gross illusion of size. We see whole races of men lost in the same illusion. . . .

"There are roses that have accomplished all but perfection, save for a few spots of red on the outer

petals—like the persistent adhering taint of ancient sins. . . . But you have seen the Clovellys —they are the best we have found. They have made us deeper and wiser for their beauty. Like some saintly lives—they seem to have come all but the last of the ninety degrees between the green of the level water-courses and the flashing gold of the meridian sun. . . . The Mother has borne them, and in due time (as men must do, or revert to the ground again) they have turned to the light of the Father. . . . The fragrance of these golden teas is the sublimate of all Nature. Man, in the same way, is inclusive of all beneath. He contains earth, air, water, fire and all their products. In the tea-rose is embodied all the forces of plant-nature, since they are the highest manifestation. . . . The June roses have lost the way in their own spice; so many flowers are sunk in the stupors from their own heavy sweetness. The mignonette has sacrificed all for perfume, and the Old Mother has given her something not elsewhere to be found; the nasturtium has progressed so purely as to have touched the cork of the inner vial, but the golden teas have brought the *fragrance itself* to our nostrils. Those who are ready can sense the whole story. It is the fragrance of the Old Mother's being. You can sense it without the rose, on the wings of a South Wind that crosses water or meadows after a rain."

27

LETTERS

OUTSIDE, as I have said, it was cracking cold. We talked thirstily by the big fire, discussed the perfect yellows in Nature—symbols of purest aspiration—and the honest browns that come to the sunlight-gold from service and wear—the yellow-brown of clustered honey bees, of the Sannysin robe, of the purple martin's breast. We were thirsting for Spring before the fire. The heart of man swells and buds like a tree. He waits for Spring like all living things. The first months of winter are full of zest and joy, but the last becomes intolerable. The little girl had not let us forget at all, and so we were yearning a full month too soon.

"I know a bit of woods," said the Abbot. "It is only two miles away. A creek runs through it, and there are hills all 'round—lots of hickory and elm and beech. There's one beech woods off by itself. Maples and chestnuts are there, too,

and many little cedars. There is a log house in the centre, and right near it a Spring——"

He was talking like an old saint would talk of the Promised Land.

"You are breaking our hearts," I said.

"The hills are dry, so you can go early," he went on. "The cattle have been there in season, as long as I can remember, so there are little open meadows like lawns. The creek is never dry, and the Spring near the log house never runs dry. I could go there now——"

"So could I," said the little girl.

They almost trapped me. I stirred in the chair, and remembered there was but an hour or two of daylight left in the afternoon. . . . Besides there was a desk covered with letters. . . . People ask problems of their own, having fancied perhaps that they met a parallel somewhere in the writings from this Study. I used to answer these perfunctorily, never descending to a form but accepting it as a part of the labour of the work. I shudder now at the obtuseness of that. I have met people who said, "I have written you several letters, but never mailed them."

"Why?" I would ask.

Answers to this question summed into the reason that they found themselves saying such personal things that they were afraid I would smile or be bored. . . . Letters are regarded as a shining

profit now, a fine part of the real fruits. The teaching-relation with young minds has shown me the wonderful values of direct contact. The class of letters that supplies sources of human value are from men and women who are too fine ever to lose the sense of proportion. The letters that are hardest to answer, and which remain the longest unanswered, are from people who have merely intellectual views; those who are holding things in their minds with such force that their real message is obstructed. I dislike aggressive mentality; it may be my weakness, but much-educated persons disorder this atmosphere. They want things; they want to discuss. A man is not free to give nor to receive when his hand or brain is occupied with holding. I have had the choicest relations with honest criticism, the criticism that is constructive because the spirit of it is not criticism. Letters, however, critical or otherwise, that are heady, do not bring the beauty that we seem to need, nor do they draw the answers they were designed for. The pure human impulse is unmistakable.

There are letters from people who want things. Some people want things so terribly, that the crush of it is upon their pages. I do not mean autographs. Those who have a penchant for such matters have learned to make reply very easy; nor do I mean those who have *habits*. There seems to be a class of men and women who want to "do" literature for money, and who ask such questions

as, "What is the best way to approach a publisher?" "What should a writer expect to make from his first novel?" "Do you sell outright or on royalty, and how much should one ask on a first book, if the arrangement is made this or that way?"

I think of such as the eighty-thousand-the-year folk. The detail of producing the novel is second to the marketing. The world is so full of meaning to the effect that fine work is not produced this way; and yet, again and again, this class of writers have gotten what they want. Much money has been made out of books by those who wrote for that. People, in fact, who have failed at many things, have settled down in mid-life and written books that brought much money.

But such are only incidents. They are not of consequence compared to the driving impulse which one man or woman in a hundred follows, to write to one who has said something that quickens the heart. . . . There was a letter on the desk that day from a young woman in one of the big finishing schools. The message of it was that she was unbearably restless, that her room-mate was restless. They were either out of all truth and reason, or else the school was, and their life at home as well. They had been brought up to take their place in that shattered world called Society —winter for accomplishments, summers for mountain and shore. They were very miserable and

they seemed to sense the existence of a different world. . . . Was there such a world? Was there work for women to do? Was it all an un-mattered ideal that such a world existed? This letter achieved an absolute free-hearted sincerity in the final page or two—that most winning quality of the younger generation.

. . . Then, many people are whole-heartedly in love around the world. Letters often bring in this reality, many calling for a wisdom that is not of our dispensation. . . . It was from personal letters first of all that I learned of the powerful corrective force, which is being established against American materialism along the Western coast. There is to-day an increasingly finer surface for the spiritual things of art and life, the farther westward one travels across the States. It is a conviction here that the vital magic of America's ideal, promulgated in the small eastern colonies, will be saved, if at all, by the final stand of its defenders with their backs to the Pacific.

All our East has suffered from the decadent touch of Europe. Matter is becoming dense and unescapable in the East. Chicago, a centre of tremendous vitalities of truth, is making a splendid fight against the entrenchments of the temporal mania; but in the larger sense, all that is *living spirit* is being driven westward before gross Matter —westward as light tends, as the progress of civilisation and extinction tends.

The gleam is in the West, but it faces the East. It is rising. In California, if anywhere in the world, the next Alexandria is to be builded. Many strong men are holding to this hope, with steady and splendid idealisation.

But there is black activity there, too. Always where the white becomes lustrous the black deepens. On the desk before me on that same winter day, was a communication from San Francisco—the last to me of several documents from a newly-formed society for applying psychology. The documents were very carefully done, beautifully typed and composed. They reckoned with the new dimension which is in the world, which is above flesh and above brain; which is, in fact, the unifying force of the brain faculties, called here Intuition. The founders of this society reckoned, too, with the fact that psychology as it has been taught from a material basis in schools and colleges is a blight. One can't, as a purely physical being, relate himself to mental processes; nor can one approach the super-mental area by the force of mentality alone.

But I found *the turning* in these documents with alarm; that the purpose divulged was to master matter for material ends. This is black business—known to be black before the old Alexandria, known to be black before the Christ came. They had asked for comment, even for criticism.

I recalled that psychology is the science of the soul, and wrote this letter:

"I have received some of your early papers and plans, and thank you. I want to offer an opinion in good spirit. I find the powerful impulse running through your effort, as expressed in the papers I have read—to play to commerce and the trade mind. This is developing fast enough without bringing inner powers to work in the midst of these low forces. They will work. They will master, but it seems to me that spiritual ruin will result. For these forces which you show in operation are the real vitalities of man, which used other than in the higher schemes of life—call in the bigger devils for man to cope with. When one begins to use the dimension of the inner life, before the lower phases of the self are mastered, he becomes a peril to himself and to others. I feel that I do not need to be explicit to psychologists. I want to be on record as strongly urging you to be sure that the animal is caged before you loose the angel. Also that I have a conviction that there are ten times too many tradesmen in the world now; and that office-efficiency is not the kind that America is in need of. I repeat that I know you are in the way of real work, and that's why I venture to show my point of view; and please believe me energetic only toward the final good of the receptive surface you have set out to impress."

28

THE ABBOT DEPARTS

ONE day in March, the Abbot said:

"You know that woods I was telling you about?"

"Yes."

"Well, my father bought it the other day."

. . . Something rolled over me, or within. This was a pervading ache that had to do with the previous summer. I had ridden several times to the Perfect Lane. It cut a man's farm in two from north to south and was natural; that is, the strip of trees had been left when the land was cleared, and they had reached a venerable age. Oak, hickory and beech—clean, vast, in-their-prime forest-men—with thorn and dogwood growing between. It had been like a prayer to ride through that Lane. The cattle had made a path on the clay and the grass had grown in soft and blue-green in the shade. In sapling days, the great trees had woven their trunks on either side of a rail-fence that had stood for a half-century. It

was an approach to the farm-house that an artist would have named an estate after—or a province.

Then came the day that I rode toward a smudge in the sky, and found men and boys at work burning and cutting. The superb aisle was down. I turned the horse and rode back. I learned that in the fields on either side of the lane a strip of land, fifty or sixty feet wide, had been too much shaded so that the corn and oats had not prospered. Perhaps it was there that the cruelty of the narrow-templed Order made its deepest impression. God bless the fodder—but what a price to pay. They had burned the thorn and dogwood, felled the giants; they would plough under that sacred cattle-path.

Then I thought of the denuded lands of North America; the billions of cubic feet of natural gas wasted; lakes of oil, provinces of pine and hardwood vanished; the vast preserves of game destroyed to the wolf and the pig and the ostrich still left in man's breast. The *story* of the struggle for life on Mars came to me—how the only water that remains in that globe of quickened evolution is at the polar caps, and that the canals draw down from the meltings of the warm season the entire supply for the midland zones. They have stopped wastage on Mars.

It was these things that came to me at the mere mention of the transfer of the woodland property.

If it were going to be cut, I was glad I hadn't seen it, and certainly I didn't want to enter now.

"What's your father going to do with it?" I asked.

"Use it for a pasture."

"Isn't going to cut it—any of it?"

"No."

Always there had been something absolute about the Abbot's *No* and *Yes*. I took hope.

"Is it thin enough to pasture?"

"The main piece is. Better come and see."

A pair of rubber boots in the corner of the Chapel caught my eye and the wan light of March outside.

"There's everything there—a virgin beech wood —a few acres of second-growth stuff that has all the vines and trailers—then the stream and the big hollow where the cattle move up and down."

"Did you have anything to do with keeping it unspoiled?" I asked.

"My father didn't intend to cut anything right away. He might have thinned the pasture section a little. I asked him not to. When he saw the way I felt about it, he said he would never cut it."

There was a healing in that *never*. . . . The Abbot was not the kind to ask his father for unreasonable things. I had seen the two together, and had studied their relation with some pleasure. In the main, the father had merely to understand, to be at one with the boy. . . . It happened that

we were alone in the Chapel at that time. I reached for the rubber-boots.

"I'll ride as far as town and put the horse up," said I. "Meet me at the far-end in a half-hour and we'll start the hike from there."

He was off at once. Chillness was still in the air, the land grey, clouds yellowish-grey and watery.

We slipped out behind the stores and out-houses to a field that had a stream running across —a stream and a hill and a band of oaks that still held fast to a few leaves on the lower limbs, where the winds could not get at them so freely. You can't expect to get anything out of an oak-tree without working for it. I have seen an oak-log softened to punk, the bark gone, having lain in a woodland shadow, doubtless for thirty or forty years, but still holding fast to its unmistakable grain and formation, though you could rub it to powder between the fingers. For quite a little way, we followed the stream which was swollen with melting snows, and then straight toward the wooded horizon line, the afternoon hastening so that we marched with it, hot under our sweaters, presently getting the stride of fence and ditch. The sun appeared at times milk-like and ghostly in the south-west. . . . That was the first time I saw the Amphitheatre.

We had reached the edge of the woodland and the height of land and looked over the wooded

slope into a silent pasture-land, a stream winding through the centre. The grass had been cropped to the last of the Fall days, and in the recent thaws the stream had overrun the entire bottom, so that the lowland pasture was not only tonsured, but combed and washed. I looked up. A beech-tree was shivering on the slope beside me, holding fast to her leaves of paper white on wide and pendent branches; a smooth and beautiful trunk of bedford grey, with eyes like kine carved upon it. Then I saw that this was but one of a sisterhood—the mother-tree fallen. Across were oaks and hickories, and through the naked branches, a log cabin.

An enumeration will not even suggest the picture. Sheep and cattle had made it a grove of the earth-gods. We remembered the Spring by the cabin, and crossed to it. Skimming the leaves from the basin, we watched it fill with that easy purity of undisturbed Nature. . . . Now there was a fine blowing rain in our faces, and the smell of the woods itself in the moist air was a Presence. The cabin had been built for many decades—built of white oak, hewn, morticed and tenoned. The roof and floor was gone, but the walls needed only chinking. They were founded upon boulders. . . . I saw in days to come a pair of windows opening to the north, and a big open fireplace on the east wall, a new floor and a new roof. . . . It would be a temple. I saw young

men and children coming there in the long years ahead. . . . Across the open field beyond was a forest.

"The big beeches are there," the Abbot said.

"It can't be so perfect as this," I declared.

"It is different. This is a grove—thinned for pasture land. Over there it is a forest of beech. To the west is a second growth of woods—everything small but thick. You can see and take things right in your hand——"

We did not go to the forest nor to the jungle that day, but moved about the rim of that delved pasture-land, watching the creek from different angles, studying the trees without their insignia. We knew the main timbers only—beech, oak, elm, maple and hickory and ash, blue beech and ironwood and hawthorn. There were others that I did not know, and the Abbot seemed disturbed that he could not always help.

"It won't be so another Spring," he said.

Altogether it hushed us. I was holding the picture of the temple of the future years—for those to come, especially for the young ones, who were torn and wanted to find themselves for a time.

"You say he is not going to cut anything from the pasture-grove?" I repeated.

"No."

There was ease in that again. We walked back with the falling dusk—across a winter wheat

field that lay in water like rice. The town came closer, and we smelled it. The cold mist in the air livened every odour. It is a clean little town as towns go, but we knew very well what the animals get from us. . . . I was thinking also what a Chinese once said to me in Newchwang. He had travelled in the States, and reported that it was a long time before he could get accustomed to the aroma of the white man's civilisation. Newchwang was long on the vine at that very moment, but he did not get that. I did not tell him. That which we are, we do not sense. Our surfaces are only open to that which we are not. We must depart from our place and ourselves, in order to catch even a fleeting glimpse, or scent, of our being. The Abbot and I lifted our noses high. The post-office was thick with staleness that held its own, though chilled. I was glad to have the horse feel as I did, and clear out for the edge of the Lake where we belonged.

. . . We went many days that Spring. The town thought us quite bereft. We were present for the hawthorn day; saw the ineffable dogwoods at their highest best; the brief bloom of the hickories when they put on their orchids and seemed displeased to be caught in such glory by human eyes. I love the colour and texture of hickory wood, but it insists on choosing its own place to live. . . . We saw the elms breaking another day, and the beech leaves come forth from

their wonderful twists of brown, formed the Fall before. Everything about the beech-tree is of the highest and most careful selection; no other tree seems so to have forgotten itself; a noble nature that has lost the need of insisting its demands and making its values known, having long since called unto itself the perfect things. . . . There was one early May day of high northwind, that we entered the beech-wood, and saw those forest lengths of trunk swaying in a kind of planetary rhythm. Full-length the beeches gave, and returned so slowly, a sweeping vibration of their own, too slow and vast for us to sense. I thought of a group of the great women of the future gathered together to ordain the way of life. There is no holier place than a beech-wood. . . .

The Abbot's father repaired the cabin for us —put in the fireplace and the windows to the north. Many nights the Chapel kindred have spent there, in part or as a party; and it is the centre of the wonderful days of our Spring Questing, when human-kind brings a thirst almost intolerable for the resuming of the Mother's magic. . . . We want it a place some day for many of the great little books of all time—the place for the Stranger to lodge and for Youth to come into its own. The Abbot's father who has made it all possible seems to like the dream, too.

. . . But the Abbot has gone back to school. I think it is only temporary. . . . He remained

after the others some weeks ago, and said to me quite coldly:

"They have decided to make me go back to school——"

"Sit down," I answered.

As I look back, I think that was said because I, too, felt the need of sitting down. He had been with me nearly a year. I had found him at first, immersed in brooding silence. In a way, that silence was chaotic; full day was far from rising upon it. He is without ambition in the worldly sense. Ambition is a red devil of a horse, but he gets you somewhere. One overcomes Inertia in riding far and long on that mount. He takes you to the piled places where the self may satisfy for the moment all its ravishing greeds. This is not a great thing to do. One sickens of this; all agony and disease comes of this. The red horse takes you as far as you will let him, on a road that must be retraced, but he gets you somewhere! Inertia does not. The point is, one must not slay the red horse of ambition until one has another mount to ride.

The Abbot caught the new mount quickly. He seemed to have had his hand on the tether when he came. The name of the red horse is Self. The white breed that we delight to ride here might be called generically Others. The Abbot was astride a fine individual at once—and away. . . . He is but fifteen now. With utmost impar-

tiality I should say that wonderful things have happened to him.

They said at his home that he has become orderly; that he rises early and regularly, a little matter perhaps, but one that was far from habitual before. They told me that he works with a fiery zeal that is new in their house; that he is good-tempered and helpful. I knew what he was doing here from day to day, and that he was giving me a great deal of that joy which cannot be bought, and to which the red horse never runs.

But the town kept hammering at his parents' ears, especially his former teachers, his pastor and Sabbath-school teacher, the hardware man. I asked his father to bring the critics for a talk in the Study, but they did not come. A friend of the family came, a pastor from Brooklyn. The appointment was made in such a way that I did not know whether he was for or against the Abbot's wish to remain in the work here. I told the story of the Abbot's coming, of his work and my ideas for him; that I would be glad to keep him by me until he was a man, because I thought he was a very great man within and believed the training here would enable him to get himself out.

My main effort with the Abbot, as I explained, was to help him develop an instrument commensurate in part with his big inner energies. I told them how I had specialised in his case to cultivate a positive and steadily-working brain-grip;

how I had sought to install a system of order through geometry, which I wasn't equipped to teach, but that one of the college men was leading him daily deeper into this glassy and ordered plane.

The fact is, the Abbot had my heart because he loved his dreams, but I used to tell him every day that a man is not finished who has merely answered a call to the mountain; that Jesus himself told his disciples that they must not remain to build a temple on the mountain of Transfiguration. Going up to Sinai is but half the mystery; the gifted one must bring stone tablets down. If in impatience and anger at men, he shatter the tablets, he has done ill toward himself and toward men, and must try once more.

It appears that I did most of the talking and with some energy, believing that the Abbot had my best coming, since the hostility against his work here had long been in the wind from the town. . . . It was the next day that the boy told me that the decision had gone against us. I cannot quite explain how dulled it made me feel. The depression was of a kind that did not quickly lift. I was willing to let any one who liked hold the impression that the obligation was all my way, but there was really nothing to fight. I went to see the Abbot's father shortly afterward. We touched just the edges of the matter. As I left he assured me:

"The minister said that he didn't think the boy would come to any harm in your Study."

There was no answer to that. . . . And yet, as I have said, we have come up in different ways from the townspeople. The manuscripts that go forth from this Study are not designed to simplify matters for them, and the books we read in the main are not from the local library. One should really rise to a smile over a matter like this. The fact is, I said to the Abbot:

"Go and show them your quality. There's no danger of your falling into competitive study. Show them that you can move in and around and through the things they ask of you. We're always open when you want to come. You're the first and always one of us. You've got the philosophy —live it. This is just a mission. Take it this way, Abbot. Take it as an honour—a hard task for which you are chosen, because you are ready. Make your days interpret the best of you. Go to it with all your might. Feel us behind you—rooting strong—and hurry back."

29

THE DAKOTAN

IT was a rainy Fall night. The Dakotan came in barefooted with two large bundles of copy. It was a bit cold to take the ground straight, but he had walked along the bluff for some distance in absolute darkness, over grassy hollows filled with water as well as bare patches of clay. One's shelf of shoes is pretty well used up on a day like this, and one learns that much labour can be spared by keeping his shoes for indoor use. Incidentally, it is worth having a garden, walled if necessary, for the joy of hoeing flowers and vegetables barefooted. . . . I had just about finished the work of the evening. It would not have mattered anyway. The Dakotan sat down on the floor before the fire and was still as a spirit. He has no sense of time nor hurry; he would have waited an hour or two, or passed along quite as genially as he came, without my looking up.

But one does not often let a friend go like this. These things are too fine, of too pure a pleasant-

ness. One does not learn the beauty of them until one has come far through terror and turmoil. It is almost a desecration to try to put such things into words; in fact, one cannot touch with words the heart of the mystery. One merely moves around it with an occasional suggestive sentence and those who know, smile warmly over the writer's words.

The Study was red with fire-light. Burning wood played with its tireless gleam upon the stones, upon the backs of books, and into the few pictures, bringing the features forth with restless familiarity. I left the desk and came to the big chair by the fire. I was glad he was there. I think I had been watching him intently for several seconds before he looked up. . . . I had not been thinking of Thoreau; at least, not for days, but it suddenly came to me that this was extraordinarily like Thoreau, who had come in so silently through the darkness to share the fire. I found that he had just been writing of the relations of men, the rarer moments of them; and queerly enough, I found that night more of the master of Walden in his work.

The Dakotan is twenty. All summer he has been doing some original thinking on the subject of Sound. When I was his age, Tyndall was the big voice on this subject; yet we have come to think in all humbleness that Tyndall only touched his toes in the stream. The Dakotan has

spent the last few years afield. He is a tramp, a solitaire, a student at the sources of life. Things have been made easier for him here. He took to this life with the same equableness of mind that he accepted the companions of hardship and drudgery on the open road. Throughout the last summer he has moved about field and wood and shore, between hours of expression at his machine, in a kind of unbroken meditation. I have found myself turning to him in hard moments. Some of our afternoons together, little was said, but much accomplished. A few paragraphs follow from the paper brought in on this particular night:

"Vibration is the law that holds the Universe together. Its energy is the great primal Breath. Vibration is life and light, heat and motion. Without it, there would be blackness and universal death. From the almost static state of rock and soil, we have risen steadily in vibration up through the first four senses, to Sound, the fifth. The scope of Sound-vibration yet to be experienced by us is beyond our wildest imagination.

"Sounds are the different rates of vibration in all things. As yet we know Sound as we know most other things, merely on the dense physical plane. The next great discoveries in higher phenomena will be made in the realm of Sound. The most marvellous powers are to be disenchanted from vibrations as yet inaudible. The present enthusiasm over *telepathy* is merely the start of far greater phenomena to come.

"It is my belief that over ninety per cent of

the sounds we know and hear are injurious, lowering, disquieting and scattering to all higher thought, to intuition and all that is fine and of the spirit. There is not one human voice in a thousand that is of a quieting influence and friendly to higher aspirations. The voice is a filler, in lieu of shortages of intellect and intuition. More and more, among fine people explanations are out of order. A man is silent in proportion to what he knows of real fineness and aspiration. Outside of that speech which is absolutely a man's duty to give out, one can tell almost to the ampere, the voltage of his inner being, or its vacantness and slavery, by the depth of his listening silences, or the aimlessness of his filling chatter. It is only those few who have come *to know,* through some annealing sorrow, sickness, or suffering, and draw away from the crowds and noises into the Silence, that become gifted with all-knowing counsels.

"There is a sound born from every thought, action, or aspiration of man, whether of a high or a low order, a sound not to be heard but felt, by any one fine and sensitive enough to receive the impression. From the collective, intuitive thoughts of attuned groups of men, thinking or working as one toward a high end, there arises a sound which is to be *felt* as a fine singing tingle by all in the vicinity. The work here proves this. At times there is an exquisite singing in the air, not audible but plainly to be felt, and a kind of emanation of light in the Chapel. We all lean forward. The voice and thought of one has become the voice and thought of all; what is to be said is sensed and known before it is uttered; all minds are one.

". . . There are moments in the soft, changing, growing, conceiving hours of dawn and sunset when Mother Nature heaves a long deep sigh of perfect peace, content and harmony. It is something of this that the wild birds voice, as they greet the sun at dawn, and again as they give sweet and melancholy notes at his sinking in the quiet of evening. Birds are impressed from without. They are reasonless, ecstatic, spontaneous, giving voice as accurately and joyously as they can to the vibrations of peace and harmony—to the *Sounds,* which they feel from Nature. Animals and birds are conscious of forces and creatures, we cannot see. . . . Unless we decide that birds generate their songs within; that they reason and study their singing, we must grant that they hear and imitate from Nature, as human composers do. The process in any case has not to do with intellect and reason, but with sensitiveness and spirit. One does not need to acquire intellect and reasoning, to have inspiration, sensitiveness, and spirit. It is the childlike and spontaneous, the sinless and pure-of-heart that attain to psychic inspiration.

"Have you ever seen at close range the rapt, listening, inspired look of the head of a wild bird in flight? Has anything fine and pure ever come to you from a deep look into the luminous eyes of a bird fresh from the free open?

". . . Study the very voices of spiritual men. They are low-pitched, seeming to issue from deep within the man; one strains to catch what is said, especially if he be used to the far-carrying, sharp, metallic, blatant speech of the West. Certain ancients were better versed in the potency of

sounds than we are to-day. Study in occult writings the magic pronunciation of *Aum, Amitabha, Allah,* of certain chants and spirit-invoking incantations of old, and one draws a conception of the powers of friendly sounds and the injurious effects of discordant sounds, such as we are surrounded by. . . .

"Many of us in the West, who are so used to din and broken rhythm, would call the *Vina,* that Oriental harp-string of the soul, a relic of barbaric times. But *Vina's* magic cry at evening brings the very elementals about the player. The voices of Nature, the lapping of water, bird-song, roll of thunder, the wind in the pines—these are sounds that bring one some slight whit of the grandeur and majestic harmony of the Universe. These are the voice of *kung,* 'the great tone' in Oriental music, corresponding somewhat to F, the middle note of the piano, supposed to be peace-invoking. In northern China the Buddhist priests sit out in evening, listening raptly to *kung,* the 'all-harmonious sound of the Hoang-ho rushing by.' One longs to be the intimate of such meditations."

30

THE DAKOTAN (*Continued*)

I FIRST heard of the Dakotan* at a time when I was not quite so interested in the younger generation. A woman friend out in his country wrote me, and sent on some of his work. I was not thrilled especially, though the work was good. She tried again, and I took the later manuscript to bed with me, one night when I was "lifted out," as the mason said. It did not work as designed. Instead of dropping off on the first page, I tossed for hours, and a letter asking him to come to Stonestudy was off in the first mail in the morning.

He is drawing entirely from his own centre of origins. That was established at once, and has been held. The only guiding required, since he is a natural writer, has been on the one point of preserving a child-like directness and clarity of expression. It is not that he wants the popular market; the quality of his *bent* precludes that for

*H. A. Sturtzel.

the present. Moreover, he can live here on what thousands of men in America spend for cigars, but our ideal of writing has to do with the straight line between the thought and the utterance.

A man's style has little or nothing to do with the words, or the sentence, paragraph or even his native eccentricities of technique; a man's style has to do with the manner of his thinking. As for words and the implements of writing, the more nearly they are made to parallel the run of thought, the better the work.

One does not learn the Dakotan's kind in a day or a year. There is a continual changing and refining production about our truest friends—the same thing in a woman that a man can love in the highest—that quickens us always to higher vision and deeper humanity. The point is that we must change and increase to be worthy of our truest relations. One must always be restless and capacious. When our eyes rest on the horizon, and do not yearn to tear it apart; when the throb of the Quest sinks low in our breast—it is time to depart. You who in mid-life think you have *arrived somewhere*—in profession, in trade, in world-standing—know that death has already touched you, that the look of your face is dissolute.

I have said to the Dakotan and to the others here: "It was good for you to come—but the time may arrive, when it will be just as good for

you to go. . . . When you see me covering old fields; when you come here for continual reviews of my little story; when your mind winces with the thought of what I am to do and say next, because you know it well already—arise and come no more, but in passing, say to me, 'To-day we did not get out of the circle of yesterday.' . . . I shall know what is meant, and it shall be good for you to tell me, since one forgets. It may be that there is still enough strength for another voyage—that I may be constrained to leave Telemachus and go forth to the edge of the land "where lights twinkle among the rocks and the deep moans round with many voices."

Recently the Dakotan told me of a dream, and I asked him to write it. I think he will draw nearer to you, if you read the story that he brought me:

"This is the latest and most complete of many under-water dreams that have come to me. In their thrall as a child I learned the deeps of fear. I do not know why dreams of mine are so often associated with water, unless at some time, way back in the beginnings, the horror of a water-existence has been so stamped upon me that it has been retained in consciousness. As a child, water and strong winds drove me to tears. I can remember no other things that brought marked fear but these. One incident of wind, on a boat going to Block Island Light-house, off Newport, remains as vivid to this day as when it was en-

acted, and I was not yet five at the time. Every one wondered at these peculiar fears, but the explanation is plainer if one can look either back or beyond.

"Knowledge is but a glimmering of past experience. We are the condensed sum of all our past activities. Normal mind and memory are only of the immediate present, only as old as our bodies, but once in a long time we fall by chance into certain peculiar conditions of body, mind, or soul —conditions that are invoking to great reaches of consciousness back into the past. Normally our shell is too thick; we are too dense and too conscious of our present physical being and vitality, for the ancient one within us to interpret to the brain. Even in sleep, the brain is usually embroiled or littered with daily life matters. The brain has not yet become a good listener, and the voice of the inner man is ever a hushed whisper.

"The exceptionally low temperature of my body was the immediate cause of this dream. Here is a conviction that I brought up from it: I believe that any one by putting himself into a state of very low temperature and vibration, almost akin to hibernation, may be enabled to go back in consciousness toward the Beginnings. Evidently red blood is wholly of man, but in some way the white corpuscles of the blood seem to be related to the cold-blooded animals and hence to the past. Under conditions, such as sleeping on the ground or in a cold, damp place, these white corpuscles may be aided to gain ascendency over the heart, brain, and red corpuscles. This accomplished, the past may be brought back.

"It was a cold, rainy Fall night that the dream

came. A bleak east wind blowing along the lake-shore, probed every recess of the 'Pontchartrain,' the tiny open-work cottage I used. The place was flushed like a sieve with wind and rain. It leaked copiously and audibly, and there was no burrowing away from the storm. I sought the blankets early in a state of very low circulation. The last thing I was conscious of, as I drifted off, was the cold, the low sound of the wind, and the rain beating upon the roof. . . .

"There was a cohering line through this dream, every detail stamped upon my consciousness so deeply that the memory of it upon awaking was almost as vivid as when I was immersed. . . . It began very slowly with a growing perception of a low monotonous lap and wash of water and a slight heaving, lifting sensation, as of my being swayed gently to and fro. It was very cold, not the biting cold we know, but a dank, lifeless, penetrating cold of water and darkness. . . . The manner of my own form was not clear to me; I was of too low a consciousness to be aware of many exterior particulars. I merely knew I belonged to darkness and deep water. In fact, during the dream I had hardly a sense of *being*, except through the outer stimuli of cold and danger. These were horribly plain. That I was a creature of the depths and dark, a bleached single-cell, was doubtless a mental conclusion from the waking contemplation afterward. In the dream, I seemed of vast size, and I believe all little creatures do, since they fill their scope as tightly as we. The spark of consciousness, or life within, seemed so faint that part of the time my body seemed a dead, immovable bulk. No sense of

self or body in comparison to outer things, was existent, except when a larger form instilled me with fear.

"My dream seemed a direct reversion back into the Beginnings, in form, consciousness, state of being, perception and instinct—everything—so that I actually lived, in infinitely dwindled consciousness, the terrible water-life.

"All was blackness. I possessed some slight volition of life that contracted in the cold. I was not in any keen suffering; I seemed too low and numbed to sense to the full the unpleasantness of my condition. . . . Presently there came a dawning light which gradually grew stronger. I did not seem to have eyes, but was conscious of the ray seemingly through the walls of my body. Slowly it increased, to a sickly wan filter of grey. It was light shining through water, a light which would have been no light to a human being. To me it was intense and fearsome, seemed to reach centres of me that were sensitive beyond expression. Though I was a mere blob, boneless and quivering, the ray was foreign and I knew what it was to cringe.

"And now I find the difficulty of interpreting the dream exactly from the point of the Cell. These things that I write I could not know then, except in smallest measure. As our greater forces are diminished by passing through the brain, these little affairs are increased by adjustment to man's waking faculties. From now, I shall give the picture as it appears to me from this distance:

"As the light increased, I contracted and sank slowly into the depths. The bottom was not far. I descended in a flowing, undulating fashion and

settled softly on the water-bed, beside a large, upjutting fang of rock. It was black in the depths. The cold penetrated all. Torpid and prone, I lay there numbed into absolute quiescence. It seemed that a torpid inertia, doomed to be everlasting, had settled upon me. I knew no want, no desire, had not the slightest will to move, to rest, to sleep, to eat, even to exist, just the dimmest sense of watchfulness and fear. It was perfect hibernation. I had descended into too low a degree of temperature and vibration to feel the need even of nourishment. I was becoming dead to the cold; everything was a pulseless void. I should never have generated an impulse to move again had not extraneous influences affected me after seeming ages had passed.

"The bottom on which I now lay was of soft, oozy silt; about me were rocks, slippery and covered with a coating of grey-green slime. Spots in the slime moved. I could hear it, or rather feel it—a sort of bubbling quake, mere beginnings of the life impulse. The tops and sides of the rocks were festooned with waving green fringes of growths, which trailed out into the water. Long, snakelike fronds and stems of whitish green, half-vegetable, half-animal, grew on the bottom. They were stationary at their bases, but were lithe and a-crawl with life in their stems, extending and contracting into the water at intervals, in a spiral, snakey manner. Their heads were like white-bleached flowers, with hairy lips, which contracted and opened constantly, engulfing the myriads of floating, microscopic forms.

"Upon the heads of some of the creepers were ghostly phosphorescent lights, which winked on

and off at intervals as the stems waved gently to and fro. I did not have an instinctive fear of these. They seemed friendly. They lit up the black depths. They and I seemed of a similar bent; they feared the forms that I feared and contracted tight to the bottom when these enemies approached. There were certain permanent spots about me that gave off other lights at intervals. The whole bottom was a dim, vast region of many-coloured lights, or more properly, dim lambent glows, of blue, green and yellow, which winked and nodded on and off in the blackness. They seemed to be the decoys of the feeders that possessed them. Each glow lit up a circle in the depths and seemed to attract food to the watcher who waved it. They were all cold lights, mere phosphorescent gleams without the searching, penetrating qualities of the light I had first felt, and they did not bother me.

". . . The ray was filtering down again. It was this that kept me alive. It increased until all above was a wan grey. One by one the many-coloured lights of the bottom winked off, the long feelers and contractile stems were drawn in, and the whole bottom became once more a motionless, dead-grey world. . . . Little sacks without eyes in that grey light, the gorging not begun, kept alive by the whip of fear. The low life would have gone on to death or dissemination had it not been for exterior forces which reached me in the shape of Fear. I shall never forget it—the Fear of the Black Bottoms.

"There was a long, hideous suspense, as the Ray held me, and the thing that I feared was not the Ray, but belonged with it. In the midst of

a kind of freezing paralysis, the struggle to flee arose within me. Yet I was without means of locomotion. Through sheer intensity of panic I expanded. Then there was a thrusting forward of the inner vital centre against the forward wall of the sack. It was the most vital part of me that was thrust forward, the heart of a rudiment, so to speak. That which remained, followed in a kind of flow. The movement was an undulation forward, brought about by the terror to escape.

"Fear is always connected with Behind. With the approach of Danger I had started *forward.* There had been no forward nor backward before, nor any sides or top to me. Now a back, a dorsal aspect, came into being, and the vital centre was thrust forward within the cell, so as to be farthest away from the danger. It is in this way that the potential centre of an organism came to be in the front, in the head, looking forward and always pointed away from the danger—protected to the last.

"As I flowed forward, the sticky fluid substance of my body sucked into the oozy bottom. I spatted myself as flat as possible, seeming to press the tenderest parts closest to the bottom. And it is in this way that the vital parts of organisms came to be underneath, on the ventral aspect, protected from above by the sides and back. As the Fear increased, I gained in strength and speed of locomotion, the same parts of my form protruding rhythmically, faster and easier, until I did not need to concentrate so intensely upon the moving-act. Doubtless I covered ages of evolution in the dream. It is in this way through the stimulus of Fear that the rudiments of organs of

locomotion were begun. And they came in the Beginnings on the ventral side, because that side was pressed close to the earth. Every sense, volition, reasoning power—everything—was generated and fostered by Fear in the Beginnings. So Fear is really the Mother of our first overcoming of Inertia.

"I do not recall being devoured by that creature of the Ray; and yet it seems as if half the life in the Bottoms was clutched in the torture of that danger. The other half was gorging. . . . Gorge, gorge, with unappeased appetite, body bulging to the bursting point, the Devourers all about me, the larger engulfing the smaller, not with mouths, but literally enclosing their prey with the walls of their bodies, so that the smaller flowed into the larger. And often the engulfed would be of greater length than the engulfer. . . .

"There was a sound made by the gorging, a distinct sound born of gluttony, not audible, but to be felt by my sensitive surfaces, a sort of emanation, not from the gorgers, but born from the engrossing intensity of the gorging act. I shall always remember it, a distinct 'ummmmmmm,' constant, and rising and falling at times to a trifle faster or lower pitch.

"Always, as the Ray would cross above me, there would be a stoppage of the emanations from the gorgers, a sinking to the bottom, and a rising again. Also there were Shadows, sinister, flowing grey forms, that preyed about the rocky bottom. These were more felt by me than heard or seen, and instilled more deadly fear than the larger Shadows that passed above. The drama of the feeding seemed doomed to go on and on forever.

Repletion would never have come to the Gorgers. Only Fear broke the spell.

"I recall a last glimpse of that ghost-life of the depths. About the rocks, the long snake-like stems and feelers were extended, and the luring decoys waved and glowed again at the ends of the stalks. With the cessation of the feeding, began the vaster, unquenchable feeding of the engulfing plants. It was steady, monotonous, inexhaustible—the winking and waving of the blue-green glows, the clustering of the senseless prey, a sudden extinguishing of the light, devouring—then the nodding gleam again. No mercy, no feeling, no reason existed in this ghost-region of bleached and bloodless things. The law was the law of Fear and Gluttony. There was a thrall to the whole drama which I am powerless to express.

". . . The embryo in the womb eats and assimilates, all unconscious. With life there is movement. The first movement takes the form of sucking-in that which prolongs life. Then there is the driving forward by Fear from without. Low life is a vibration between Fear and Gluttony. In every movement is the gain of power to make another movement. That is the Law of life.

"I opened my eyes. The wan grey light of morning was shining in my face. I felt weak and unrested. There were puddles of water on the foot of the bed. The blankets lay heavily about my limbs, and circulation was hardly sufficient to hold consciousness. The effects of the dream oppressed me the rest of that day and for long afterward."

31

THE HILL ROCKS

OUR tendency is to return to the pioneers for inspiration. . . . I was thinking this morning how in all our studies we had passed quickly over the intellectualists, the simplifiers, the synthesisers and explainers—back to the sources of philosophy and sanctity. It is there that we find the flame. We linger and return to such men as Boehme, Fichte, Romini-Serbati, Fröbel, Swedenborg. We delight in the few great and isolated names of Greece and Rome that are above style. We turn continually to the perpetual fountains of India, but seldom to Egypt.

We love the prophets of the Old Testament, but despise chosen peoples at every appearance; we delight in the lineage of the Messiah; we are stimulated by the Hebrew literature, by its symbolism, its songs and precepts, the Oriental colour of it, the hierarchy of its saints, the strange splendour of its women, but as a book of devotion its

chief significance is that of a huge vessel prepared for the coming of a Master.

The New Testament is our first book. Manhandled and perverted as it has been by early writers, who still wanted Moses and laboured under the misconception that Jesus was expounding the doctrines of Moses afresh, instead of refuting many of them—yet the New Testament stands highest above all hands pointing heavenward.

In the case of the teacher here, it was not the so-called orthodoxy that accomplished this allegiance to the New Testament. Modern churches drove him forth into the Farther East. It was the return from Patanjali and the Vedas and much of that excellent and ancient wisdom of the Earlier Arrival, that gave him a fresh surface for understanding the pilgrimage and the passion of Jesus.

Our own Tolstoi has done much to restore the Son of Mary to a sceptical generation. To us Tolstoi's great work is not through the vehicle of the novel. Though comparisons are everywhere questionable, it seems to us that the Russian's task on the later Scriptures is as significant as Luther's. Certainly he has prepared them to stand the more searching and penetrative gaze of the coming generation. Many of the new voices rise to declare that it is doubtful if there really was an historic Jesus. Still the man matters less than his influence. His story is emphatically in the world; the spirit of

it lives above all dogma and vulgarity, even above nationalism. It is the breath of Brotherhood and Compassion. It is nearer to us and less complex than the story of the Buddha.

Every such coming heightens the voltage of spiritual power in the world. The greatest stories of the world are the stories of such comings. Of first importance in the education of children is the institution of an ideal of the imminence of great helpers, the Compassionates. Children become starry-eyed as they listen. I think if we could all shake ourselves clear of the temporal and the unseemly, we should find deep in our hearts, a strange expectancy. A woman said, as we talked of these things:

"I seem to have been expectant for centuries."

When such ideals are held in mind, an adjustment of conduct follows at once. To be ready (I am not talking religiously) for a revered Guest, one immediately begins to put one's house in order. Indeed, there's a reproach in finding the need of rushed preparation, in the hastening to clear corners and hide unseemly objects; and yet, this is well if the reorganisation is more than a passing thought. To make the ordering of one's house a life-habit is a very valid beginning in morality.

We talk continually of the greatest of men; sometimes our voices falter, and sentences are not finished. We have found many things alike about

the Great Ones. First they had mothers who dreamed, and then they had poverty to acquaint them with sorrow. They came up hard, and they were always different from other children. They suffered more than the others about them, because they were more sensitive.

They met invariably the stiffest foe of a fine child—misunderstanding; often by that time, even the Mother had lost her vision. Because they could not find understanding in men and women and children, they drew apart. Such youths are always forced into the silence. . . . I often think of the education of Hiawatha by old Nokomis, the endless and perfect analogies of the forest and stream and field, by which a child with vision can gain the story of life. Repeatedly we have discussed the maiden who sustained France—her girlhood in the forests of Domremy. It was a forest eighteen miles deep to the centre, and so full of fairies that the priests had to come to the edge and give mass every little while to keep them in any kind of subjection. That incomparable maiden did not want the fairies in subjection. She was listening. From the centres of the forest came to her the messages of power. . . . Once when the Chapel group had left, I sat thinking about this maiden; and queerly enough, my mind turned presently to something in St. Luke, about the road to Emmaus—the Stranger who had walked with the disciples, and finally made him-

self known. And they asked one to the other after He had vanished: "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?"

. . . Returning from their silences, these torture-quickened youths found work to do—work that people could not understand. The people invariably thought there must be a trick about the giving—that the eager one wanted hidden results for self. . . . Invariably, they were prodigious workers, men of incredible energy. Thus they ground themselves fine; and invariably, too, they were men of exalted personal conduct, though often they had passed before the fact was truly appreciated.

First of all, they were honest—that was the hill-rock. Such men come to make crooked paths straight, but first they straighten out themselves. They stopped lying to other men, and what was greater still, they stopped lying to themselves. Sooner or later men all came to understand that they had something good to give—those closest to them, not always seeing it first. . . .

You couldn't buy them—that was first established; then they turned the energies of their lives outward instead of in. The *something* immortal about them was the loss of the love of self. Losing that, they found their particular *something* to do. They found their work—the one thing that tested their own inimitable powers—and that,

of course, proved the one thing that the world needed from them. As self-men they were not memorable. Self-men try to gather in the results to themselves. The world-man wants to give something to his people—the best he has from his hand or brain or spirit. That's the transaction —the most important in any life—to turn out instead of in. . . . Here I am repeating the old formula for the making of men, as if in the thrill of the absolutely new—the eternal verity of loving one's neighbour.

Each man of us has his own particular knack of expression. Nothing can happen so important to a man as to find his particular thing to do. The best thing one man can do for another is to help him find his work. The man who has found his work gets from it, and through it, a working idea of God and the world. The same hard preparation that makes him finally valuable in his particular work, integrates the character that finally realises *its own religion*. The greatest wrong that has been done us by past generations is the detachment of work and religion—setting off the Sabbath as the day for expressing the angel in us, and marking six days for the progress of the animal.

All good work is happiness—ask any man who has found his work. He is at peace when the task is on, at his best. He is free from envy and desire. Even his physical organs are healthfully

active. The only way to be well is to give forth. When we give forth work that tests our full powers, we are replenished by the power that drives the suns. Giving forth, we automatically ward off the destructive thoughts. Our only safe inbreathing physically, mentally, and spiritually is from the upper source of things—not in the tainted atmospheres of the crowds. A man's own work does not kill. It is stimulus, worry, ambition, the tension and complication of wanting results for self, that kill.

Each man stands as a fuse between his race and the creative energy that drives the whole scheme of life. If he doubles this fuse *in* to self, he becomes a non-connective. He cannot receive from the clean source, nor can he give. What he gets is by a pure animal process of struggle and snatch. He is a sick and immoral creature. Turning the fuse outward, he gives his service to men, and dynamos of cosmic force throw their energy through him to his people. He lives. According to the carrying capacity of his fuse is he loved and remembered and idealised for the work he does.

A jar of water that has no lower outlet can only be filled so full before it spills, but open a lower vent and it can be filled according to the size of the outpouring. Now there is a running stream in the vessel. All life that does not run is stagnant.

There is a task for every man. We are born with different equipments, but if we have a gift, be very sure it is not fortuitous. We have earned it. It should make us the finer workman. But all work is good. The handle of an axe is a poem.

We would never destroy the natural resources of the earth, if we, as men, found our work. Rather we would perceive the way of old Mother Earth who turns to her God for light and power, and from that pure impregnation, brings forth her living things. We would shudder at all destruction and greed, and perceive as good workmen the excellent values of woods and coals and gases, and the finer forces of the soil. We would perceive that they are to be cared for; that their relation to man is service; that they have no relation to great individual fortunes. These are the free gifts from our Mother. As good workmen we would realise that greed and competition pulls upon, and tortures into activity, all that is insane within us.

The thing that brings men together in real talk, that makes the hush in Chapel or where talk is anywhere; the thing that clutches the throat, and sometimes brings the smart to the eyes—is the quality of men who have found their work, and who have lost the love of self. They are the conservers. They see first what is good for us to do and be. We follow their thoughts in action

afterward, as water follows the curve of a basin. They go after the deep-down men; they dream of the shorter passages to India; they sense the new power in the world; their faces are turned to the East for the rising of new stars. Often they die to make us see, but others spring to finish their work. Our hearts burn within us when we speak of their work.

32

ASSEMBLY OF PARTS

OTHERS have come; there are fresh wonders to me, but this book must close. . . . The development of each young mind is like doing a book—each a different book. Fascination attends the work. I assure you a teacher gets more than he can give. . . . Every mill should be a school. Every professional man should call for his own. A man's work in the world should be judged by his constructive contacts with the young minds about him. A man should learn the inspiration which comes in service for the great Abstraction, the many, from which there is no answer; but he can only become powerful and unerring by trying out the results of his offerings face to face with his own group. It should be as natural for a matured man to gather his mental and spiritual familiars about him as it is for him to become the head of a domestic establishment.

There is chance for the tradesmen to turn a

little from ledger and margin, to the faces of the young about them—those who have come for the wages of bread. Many philanthropists would carve their names on stone, as great givers to the public. The public will not take these things personally; the public laughs and lightly criticises. Men who have nothing but money to give away cannot hope to receive other than calculating looks and laughter that rings with derision.

The time will come when matters of trade in the large shall be conducted nationally and municipally. The business of man is to produce something. The man who produces nothing, but who sits in the midst of other men's goods, offering them for sale at a price greater than he paid, such a man moves in the midst of a badly-lit district of many pitfalls. It is the same with a man at a desk, before whom pass many papers representing transactions of merchandise and whose business it is to take a proprietary bite out of each. He develops a perverted look at life, and a bad bill of moral health. There is no exception to this, though he conduct a weekly bible lesson for the young, even move his chair to a church every seventh day.

The drama of the trade mind is yet to be written. It is a sordid story; the figure at the last is in no way heroic. It would not be a popular story if done well.

The time is not far off, except to those whose

eyes are dim, when countries will be Fatherlands in the true sense—in the sense of realising that the real estate is not bounded land, vaulted gold, not even electrified matter, but the youth of the land. Such is the treasure of the Fatherland. The development of youth is the first work of man; the highest ideal may be answered first hand. Also through the development of the young, the father best puts on his own wisdom and rectitude.

The ideal of education has already been reversed at the bottom. There is pandemonium yet; there is colossal stupidity yet, but Order is coming in. It would be well for all men meditatively to regard a kindergarten in action. Here are children free in the midst of objects designed to supply a great variety of attractions. There is that *hum* in the room. It is not dissonance. The child is encouraged to be himself and express himself; never to impinge upon his neighbour's rights, but to lose himself in the objects that draw him most deeply.

I have mentioned the man who caught the spiritual dream of all this, who worked it out in life and books. One of his books was published nearly a hundred years ago. It wasn't a book on kindergarten, but on the education of man. I have not read this of Fröbel's work. I wanted to do these studies my own way, but I know from what I have seen of kindergartens, and what teachers of kindergartens have told me, that the work is true—that

"The Education of Man" is a true book. Nor would it have lived a hundred years otherwise.

The child is now sent to kindergarten and for a year is truly taught. The process is not a filling of brain, but an encouragement of the deeper powers, their organisation and direction. At the end of the year, the child is sent into the first grade, where the barbaric process of competitive education and brain-cramming is carried on as sincerely as it was in Fröbel's time. . . . A kindergarten teacher told me in that low intense way, which speaks of many tears exhausted:

"I dare not look into the first-grade rooms. We have done so differently by them through the first year. When the little ones leave us, they are wide open and helpless. They are taken from a warm bath to a cold blast. Their little faces change in a few days. Do you know the ones that stand the change best? The commoner children, the clever and hard-headed children. The little dreamers—the sensitive ones—are hurt and altered for the worse. Their manner changes to me, when I see them outside. You do not know how we have suffered."

Some of the greatest teachers in America today are the kindergarten teachers; not that they are especially chosen for quality, but because they have touched reality in teaching. They have seen, even in the very little ones, that response which is deeper than brain. If the great ideal that is car-

ried out through their first year were continued through seven years, the generation thus directed would meet life with serenity and without greed. They would make over the world into a finer place to be.

I wonder if I may dare to say it once more? . . . It came this way in Chapel just a few days ago. There was a pencil in my hand, and something of man's ideal performance here below appeared more than ever clearly. I am putting down the picture, much as it came then, for the straightest way to write anything is as you would tell it:

". . . This pencil is a man, any man. Above is spirit; below matter. The world of spirit is finished. The plan is already thought out there, to the utmost detail. This above is the Breath, the Conception, the Emanation, the Dream, the Universal Energy—philosophers have called it by many names, but they mean the God-Idea wrought of necessity in Spirit, since God is spirit.

"The world of matter below is not finished. Certain parts are completed, but not all, and the assembly of parts is just begun. The material world is lost in the making of parts, forgetting that the plan is one—that the parts of matter must be assembled into a whole—that a replica must be made in matter of the one great spiritual Conception. So long as men are identified with

parts, there is dissonance from the shops of earth, a pulling apart instead of together.

"The many are almost ready to grasp the great unifying conception. This is the next step for the human family as a whole; this the present planetary brooding. Much we have suffered from identifying ourselves with parts. Rivalries, boundaries, jealousies, wars—all have to do with the making of parts. Beauty, harmony, peace and brotherhood have to do with the assembly of parts into one. That which is good for the many is good for the one; and that which is good for the one is good for the many—*the instant* we leave the part and conceive the whole.

"All the high-range voices for hundreds of years have proclaimed that the plan is one. The world to-day is roused with the Unifiers—voices of men in every city and plain crying out that we are all one in aim and meaning, that the instruments are tuned, the orchestra ready, the music in place—but the players, alas, lost as yet in frenzy for their own little parts. The baton of the leader is lifted, but they do not hear. In their self-promulgation they have not yet turned as one to the conductor's eyes. The dissonance is at its highest, yet the hour has struck for the lift of harmony.

"Look again at the pencil that stands for man. Above is the spiritual plan all finished. Every invention, every song and poem and heroism to

be, is there. One by one for ages, the aspiring intelligence of man has touched and taken down the parts of this spiritual plan, forced the parts into matter, making his dream come true. Thus have come into the world our treasures. We preserve them—every gift from a spiritual source. Often we preserve them (until they are fully understood) against our will. The mere matter-models break down and are lost, for matter changes endlessly until it is immortalised, as our bodies must be through the refinement of spiritual union.

"Our pioneers, by suffering and labour, even by fasting and prayer, have made themselves fine enough to contact some little part of that finished plan. They have lowered it into matter for us to see—step by step—the song into notes, the poem into words, the angel into paint or stone; and the saints have touched dreams of great service, bringing down the pictures of the dream somehow in matter—and their own bodies often to martyrdom. . . .

"Below the pencil is the world of matter, at this hour of its highest disorganisation. The very terror and chaos of the world is an inspiration to every unifying voice. Here below are already many parts; above, the plan as a whole and the missing parts. Man stands between—the first creature to realise that there is an above, as well as a below. All creatures beneath man are driven;

they look down. Man alone has looked up; man has raised himself erect and may take what he will from the spiritual source to electrify his progress. Man becomes significant the moment he realises that the plan is not for self, but for the race; not for the part, but for the whole.

"I have written it in many different ways, and told it in many more. There are endless analogies. Thousands before me have written and sung and told the same. It is the great Story. We see it working out even in these wrecking days. The plan is already in the souls of men. . . . And what has this to do with education?

"Everything. The brain sees but the part. The development of brain will never bring to child or man the conception of the spiritual plan. There is a man to come for every missing part. Each man, as he develops, is more and more a specialist. These missing parts shall be taken down from spirit and put into matter by men whose intrinsic gifts are developed to contact them. Thus have come the great poems and inventions so far, the splendid sacrifices of men, and all renunciation for the healing of the nations.

"I would first find the work for the child. The finer the child the easier this part of the task. Then I would develop the child to turn to a spiritual source for his inspiration—his expectation to a spiritual source for every good and

perfect thing. The dream is there; the other half of the circle is to produce the dream in matter.

"Education is thus religion—but not the man-idea of religion. It has nothing to do with creeds or cults, with affirmations or observances. It has to do with establishing connection with the sources of power, and bringing the energy down into the performance of constructive work in matter. Religion isn't a feeling of piety or devoutness; it is action. Spirituality is intellect inspired.

"The mountain is broad at the base only. There are many paths upward. These paths are far apart only at the base. On the shoulder of the mountain we hear the voices of those who have taken the other paths. Still higher, we meet. The Apex is a point; the plan is one.

"I would teach the young mind to find his own voice, his own part, his own message. It is there above him. True training is the refinement, the preparing of a surface fine enough to receive his part. That is the inspiration. The out-breath—the right hand of the process—is action, making a model in matter of the thing received.

"All training that does not encourage the child to look into the Unseen for his power, not only holds, but draws him to the commonness of the herds.

". . . Many men to-day can believe in angels

who cannot believe in fairies; but the child who sees the changes of light in the lowliest shadows, whose fancy is filled with little figures of the conservers and colourers of nature, shall in good time see the angels—and one of that host shall come forward (which is more important and to the point) bringing a task for the child to do.

"I say to the children here: 'I do not see the things you do, and in that I am your inferior. They shut the doors upon me when I was little, not meaning to, but the world always does that. That fineness of seeing went out from my eyes, but it is so good a thing that I do not want you to lose it. And always I am ready to listen, when you tell me what you have seen.' "

THE END

MIDSTREAM

. . . A hint from the first-year's recognition of a book that was made to remain in American literature:

Boston Transcript: If it be extravagance, let it be so, to say that Comfort's account of his childhood has seldom been rivaled in literature. It amounts to revelation. Really the only parallels that will suggest themselves in our letters are the great ones that occur in *Huckleberry Finn*. . . . This man Comfort's gamut is long and he has raced its full length. One wonders whether the interest, the skill, the general worth of it, the things it has to report of all life, as well as the one life, do not entitle *Midstream* to the very long life that is enjoyed only by the very best of books.

San Francisco Argonaut: Read the book. It is autobiography in its perfection. It shows more of the realities of the human being, more of god and devil in conflict, than any book of its kind.

Springfield Republican: It is difficult to think of any other young American who has so courageously reversed the process of writing for the "market" and so flatly insisted upon being taken, if at all, on his own terms of life and art. And now comes his frank and amazing revelation, *Midstream*, in which he captures and carries the reader on to a story of regeneration. He has come far; the question is, how much farther will he go?

Mary Fanton Roberts in *The Craftsman:* Beside the stature of this book, the ordinary novel and biography are curiously dwarfed. You read it with a poignant interest and close it with wonder, reverence and gratitude. There is something strangely touching about words so candid, and a draught of philosophy that has been pressed from such wild and bitter-sweet fruit. The message it contains is one to sink deep, penetrating and enriching whatever receptive soul it touches. This man's words are incandescent. Many of us feel that he is breathing into a language, grown trite from hackneyed usage, the inspiration of a quickened life.

Ida Gilbert Myers in *Washington Star:* Courage backs this revelation. The gift of self-searching animates it. Honesty sustains it. And Mr.

Comfort's rare power to seize and deliver his vision inspires it. It is a tremendous thing—the greatest thing that this writer has yet done.

George Soule in *The Little Review:* Here is a man's life laid absolutely bare. A direct, big thing, so simple that almost no one has done it before—this Mr. Comfort has dared. People who are made uncomfortable by intimate grasp of anything, to whom reserve is more important than truth—these will not read *Midstream* through, but others will emerge from the book with a sense of the absolute nobility of Mr. Comfort's frankness.

Edwin Markham in *Hearst's Magazine:* Will Levington Comfort, a novelist of distinction, has given us a book alive with human interest, with passionate sincerity, and with all the power of his despotism over words. He has been a wandering foot—familiar with many strands; he has known shame and sorrow and striving; he has won to serene heights. He tells it all without vaunt, relating his experience to the large meanings of life for all men, to the mystic currents behind life, out of which we come, to whose great deep we return.

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